

CAPTAINS DON'T CRY *by* EDMUND GILLIGAN

25¢



AUG.

Adventure

FLIGHT WITHOUT
WINGS

by SIDNEY
HERSCHEL SMALL

GEORGES
SURDEZ
AND
OTHERS



FOUNTAIN PENS FOR READERS OF POPULAR PUBLICATIONS

**NEW BREATH-TAKING LOW PRICE OFFER
WHILE THEY LAST!**

**Yes! In Spite of Fountain Pen Shortage This
DELUXE FINE PEN SENT TO READERS**

For Astounding Close-Out Price ONLY

Yes, it seems almost unbelievable that anybody could or would offer a brand new Deluxe Fountain Pen—beautiful—GUARANTEED—an amazing improvement with most of the features formerly found only on high priced fountain pens, at a price so sensational! You know how scarce fountain pens are, how hard to get! But this marvelous news is true! Once more the nationally known John Pen Company has scored a sensational scoop! Once more it offers while they last, a purchase of exceptional pens, at a price so low as to be actually breathtaking. For men, women, boys, girls, this pen you will receive for only \$1.49 has VISIBLE INK SUPPLY... 14K GOLD PLATE CLIP... 14K GOLD PLATE VELVET PEN POINT THAT WRITES BOLD OR FINE AS YOU WISH! To fill this regulation size, amazing new model Fountain Pen, just use the brand new triple capacity ONE-STROKE FILLER... this pen actually holds three times as much ink as ever before. You'll love the modern shape, the beautiful life-lasting plastic barrel. And here's more wonderful news! On Your Pen In Gold Will Be Imprinted FREE of Extra Charge Your Name or Initials!

\$1.49

With Your
Name or
Initials
Imprinted
In Gold

FREE

**This Sensational Offer May Never Be Made
Again—You Should Act At Once**

Don't forget, this great pen is backed by a guarantee of life-time service! This is certainly an offer you can't pass up even if you already have a pen. It makes an ideal gift, particularly for students, folks in the Armed Services, and war workers everywhere. But you can't afford to delay. You may never hear or read of this magnificent offer again, your opportunity may be forever lost. You take no risk. You must be satisfied every way, or you need only return for prompt refund of your money in full. And just think, not only will you get this splendid pen at this sensational low price of \$1.49, but...

FREE For Acting Promptly, You Get Your Name
or Initials Imprinted Beautifully in Gold; Giving You
a Pen You'll Always Be Proud of

Everyone loves to have their valued personal possessions bear their name or initials for it gives distinction—exclusiveness—class. Often, however, imprinting service costs much extra. Think what it means then that under this great offer, you can thrill with pride not only over the smartness of your brand new model pen, but also over your own name or initials imprinted on it in gold. Then, too, your name or initials serve as identification, helping to guard against loss. And this service, remember, is absolutely FREE of extra cost for prompt action. So simply PRINT in the Coupon the name or initials you wish imprinted. If you order more than one pen, write names or initials on separate sheet of paper and attach to coupon. But don't wait. Get the coupon in the mail today.

YOUR NAME
GOES HERE

**Famous Triple
Capacity Filler
14K Gold Plated
Clip
Visible Ink
Supply**

**"Million Word"
14K Gold Plated
Pen Point**

**Name and
Initials
Imprinted in
Gold Free of
Extra Cost**

**SEND NO MONEY
JUST MAIL COUPON**

**Then Examine, Try 10 Days on Our Positive Assurance
of Money Back If You Are Not Satisfied.**

Yes, test this pen 10 full days. Mail Coupon and on arrival of your pen pay postman only \$1.49, plus postage. (If remittance comes with order, postage prepaid.) Then show it to your friends and see if they don't think you paid 3 or 4 times its low cost to you. Fill it, write with it as many times as you wish. Marvel over the amazing amount of ink it holds. . . . Note how easily it fills. . . . thrill to its beauty. Then, if you can bear to part with it after 10 days inspection and test, just return the pen for full and prompt refund of purchase price. You'll agree that's a generous and fairest of offers, won't you? Then don't wait, but mail coupon at once. Do it now while this is before you.

JOHN PEN CO.

Dept. 18-K, 107 N. Wacker Drive

CHICAGO 6,

ILLINOIS

MAIL COUPON QUICK

**John Pen Company, Dept. 18-K
107 N. Wacker Drive, Chicago 6, Ill.**

Send me Deluxe Pen(s) at \$1.49 each. On arrival I will pay postman amount of order plus postage under your positive assurance that I may try 10 days and if not satisfied I can return the pen(s) for full refund. (If remittance comes with order, we pay the postage.)

Print name or initials to be imprinted in gold letters

Name

Address

P. O. State

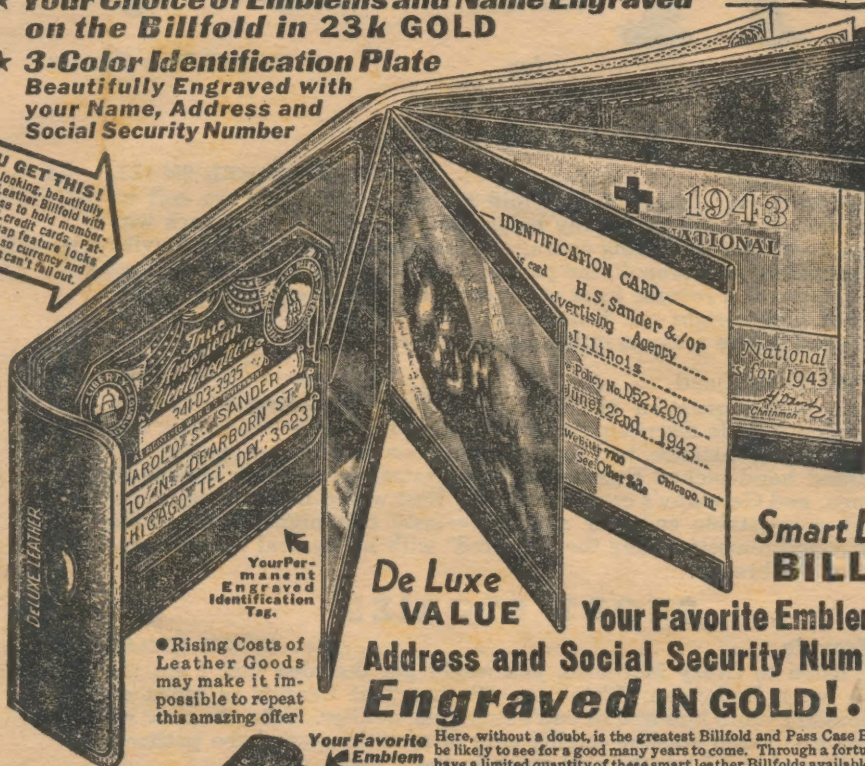
Here's the Greatest **BILFOLD BARGAIN** in all America!

3 BIG VALUES in ONE

All for only
\$1.98

- ★ This Smart Leather Billfold and Pass Case
- ★ Your Choice of Emblems and Name Engraved on the Billfold in 23k GOLD
- ★ 3-Color Identification Plate Beautifully Engraved with your Name, Address and Social Security Number

YOU GET THIS!
Smart looking, beautifully styled Leather Billfold with snap feature locks securely so currency and valuables can't fall out.



HAROLD S. SANDER

YOUR NAME ENGRAVED HERE!

Your Permanent Engraved Identification Tag.

● Rising Costs of Leather Goods may make it impossible to repeat this amazing offer!

De Luxe
VALUE

Smart Leather
BILFOLD

Your Favorite Emblem, Name,
Address and Social Security Number . . .
Engraved IN GOLD!.. All At This One LOW PRICE

YOU GET THIS!
Your choice of Emblem and your Name richly Engraved in 23k Gold on the Face of the Billfold. Your name is also engraved in Gold, inside the Billfold.



Your Favorite Emblem Here

Your Full Name Here

YOU GET THIS!
A beautiful 3-color Emergency Identification Plate which carries your full name, address and Social Security Number. A perfect identification record for you.



ILLINOIS MERCHANDISE MART
500 N. Dearborn St., Chicago 10, Ill.

Rush Your Order! OUR SUPPLY OF LEATHER BILFOLDS IS LIMITED!

Here, without a doubt, is the greatest Billfold and Pass Case Bargain that you'll be likely to see for a good many years to come. Through a fortunate purchase we have a limited quantity of these smart leather Billfolds available at this low price. If you have shopped around, you know that it is virtually impossible to get a good leather Billfold of this type beautifully engraved in gold with your Lodge Emblem or Army, Navy, Marine or Air Corps Insignia and Name at this sensational low price. In addition we also send you a specially designed 3-color Emergency Identification Plate, on which we engrave your Social Security Number, your Name and your Address. This smart Leather Billfold must actually be seen to be fully appreciated. Besides the spacious compartment at the back which can be used for currency, checks, papers, etc., it has 4 pockets each protected by celluloid to prevent the soiling of your valuable membership and credit cards. This handsome Billfold has the sturdy appearance and style usually found in costlier Billfolds.

● Due to difficulty in obtaining good leather because of war conditions, the supply of these Billfolds is limited. Remember, you get 3 Big Values for only \$1.98. So rush your order today! If after receiving your Engraved Billfold, you don't positively agree that this is the most outstanding bargain you ever came across, return it and we'll refund the money.

Rush This Coupon For This Once-In-A-Lifetime Bargain!

ILLINOIS MERCHANDISE MART, Dept. 3000-R
500 N. Dearborn St., Chicago 10, Ill.

If you want a LODGE, ARMY or NAVY INSIGNIA, state name here
[I] enclose \$1.98, plus new 20% Federal Tax (total \$2.37). Please send me prepaid a Smart Leather Billfold with my name and favorite Emblem engraved in 23k Gold. You are also to include the Emergency Identification Plate carrying my Full Name, Address, Social Security No.

MY FULL NAME _____ (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____

☐ Check here if you want us to ship the above C. O. D. for only \$1.98 plus 20% Tax, postage and U. S. D. charges. © Social Security Number

THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE



Adventure

(Registered U. S. Patent Office)



Vol. 111, No. 4

for
August, 1944

Best of New Stories

NOVELETTES

- Flight Without Wings**.....SIDNEY HERSCHEL SMALL 32
"The Amerika-jin," Major Taksei told his young officers, "are soft as *isu-karemu*. They will melt away before your bullets." The remark was supposed to bolster the fading courage of the Nip airmen but Lew Davies—masquerading as Koropok, the pariah Ainu—overheard it and decided to give the words a reverse twist of his own. So three Yank flyers melted away that night—right out from under the eyes of the Shoyuji Prison guards—and before a single bullet could be fired.

- The Wise Pick Their Dead**.....GEORGES SURDEZ 66
 Life was just a question of "selective killing" according to Colonel Huguenain. A little discriminate blood-letting in France before the war ever started, for instance, and there'd have been no Nazi occupation. Or a thousand hand-picked Russian victims, instead of random legions of dead men, and Germany's campaign in the East would never have crumbled. A comfortable code for a soldier—until one night in Oran the colonel found himself among the "selected" with his cynical canon blowing up at the breech.

SHORT STORIES

- Petticoat Trouble**.....KEITH EDGAR 27
 If you listen to Crazy McIntosh, you might get the idea that I am the world's worst brakeman. 'Tain't so. It's just that Crazy's so mean an ogre couldn't stand him and he can't stand me, neither. Take the time we had that eastbound hotshot—eighty cars of munitions—and the petticoat pipe collapsed and I left the coal scoop in the firebox.
- Oil Field Liar**.....MODY C. BOATRIGHT 49
 Introducing Gib Morgan—as mythical as Paul Bunyan and as real as Davy Crockett—whose "tall tales" make the Pecos Bill legends of the cowboys seem feeble fibs by comparison; the fabulous exploits of the stevedores' John Henry pale to insignificance.
- A Job for Joe**.....MURRAY MORGAN 54
 It was no cinch—the mission they'd picked out for him—even if everything went smoothly. But though Joe spoke Rumanian and knew his way around the country like a native, it's awfully easy to forget the little things that arouse suspicion in Gestapo-ridden territory. Maybe a German uniform in the first place would have been smarter than the peasant costume he'd worn. At least it would have saved him the trouble of changing his clothes in church.

WILL BE OUT ON AUGUST 11TH ◆ ◆ ◆

It Happened to a Dog (an off-the-trail story)..... A. B. SHIFFRIN 122
What happened to Sam Fisher shouldn't have happened to a dog—but it did. And what happened to Copper, Sam's pooch, shouldn't have happened to Fisher—but it did, too. And that's Sam's and Copper's story—and they intend to stick to it.

SERIALS

Captains Don't Cry (1st of 5 parts)..... EDMUND GILLIGAN 10
Sole survivor of a vanished fleet she was—the *Golden Hind*—Gloucester's last topsail schooner—waging a gallant death battle against the powered trawlers that infest the Grand Banks today. Three captains she had—which ought to be enough for any craft—but the trouble was, they hated each other as much as they all loved the *Hind*. One wanted to sell her; one put Deisels in her; one keep her as she was. All of which just meant hell for the lady till she took command and made her own choice.

Swain's Landfaring (conclusion)..... ARTHUR D. HOWDEN SMITH 104
You have come uninvited to my castle. My one reward for my enemies is the boon of death. It shall be yours if you tarry. Thus wrote Sinan, Master of the Assassins, Keeper of the Gates of Paradise, to Swain the Orkneyman. "So much for Sinan," rasped Swain—and unsheathing Skullbiter proceeded to write an answer even the Lord of Darkness could not ignore.

THE FACT STORY

Symmes' Hole..... ROYAL ORNAN SHREVE 97
There have been plenty of crackpot projects initiated on the floor of Congress but Captain Symmes' probably takes the prize. All he wanted was for the government to supply ships and money for an expedition to explore and annex the *inside of the earth!* The Honorable Senator from Kentucky almost wangled it for him, too.

VERSE

Paul Bunyan, C. G. FLORENCE BURRILL JACOBS 64
*Now he stands on Katahdin and looks off south
For periscopes up the Penobscot mouth.*

DEPARTMENTS

The Camp-Fire..... Where readers, writers and adventurers meet 6
Ask Adventure..... Information you can't get elsewhere 136
Ask Adventure Experts..... The men who furnish it 137
Lost Trails..... Where old paths cross 140
The Trail Ahead..... News of next month's issue 139

*Cover painted for Adventure by Gordon Grant
Kenneth S. White, Editor*

IF YOUR COPY OF THIS MAGAZINE IS LATE—

We regret that, due to the difficulties of wartime transportation, your *Adventure* may sometimes be a little late in reaching you. If this should happen, your patience will be appreciated. Please do not write complaining of the delay. It occurs after the magazine leaves our offices and is caused by conditions beyond our control.
—The Publishers.

THE CAMP-FIRE

Where Readers, Writers
and Adventurers Meet



EDMUND GILLIGAN, whose name hasn't been on our contents page since "Lost Dory" appeared back in the December '39 issue, is the author of several novels of the sea, including "Boundary Against Night," "White Sails Crowding" (from which "Lost Dory" was an excerpt), "The Ringed Horizon" and "The Gaunt Woman." The latter, a tale of the Gloucester topsail schooners and the dorymen who fought against the U-boats when they were raiding the fishing fleets of the Grand Banks, is based in part on actual experiences the author had while serving as a seaman on a submarine chaser in the last war. It was first published as a serial in the *Saturday Evening Post* two years ago; then, as a book, it was a Literary Guild selection and became a best-seller. "The Ringed Horizon" is another yarn of the same warfare. "White Sails Crowding," a historical novel of the Gloucestermen of a century ago, when the topsail schooner was at the height of its usefulness, was the first novel of the Grand Banks to be written by an American writer.

To his "Captains Don't Cry," which begins in this issue of *Adventure*, Mr. Gilligan appends the following comment—

In my own lifetime I have seen the topsail schooner pass from the Banks and be replaced by powered vessels. I once sailed on the great schooner *Columbia*, which was the last topsail schooner actually to work under sail out of Gloucester. I was on her for a voyage in the season of 1924 just before she was lost with all hands on the sands of Sable Island, that graveyard of the Atlantic, where over a thousand vessels have been buried.

Two years ago I was serving as a hand on the grand old *Gertrude Thebaud*, Ben Pine's famous schooner, when she made her final cruise to the Grand Banks as a dory trawler. She was the last vessel, as far as I know, ever to carry working dories out of Gloucester. We killed 90,000 pounds of groundfish on that cruise. After that voyage, the *Thebaud* was turned over to the Navy. She put on her battle dress of gray and went out to the submarine patrols. I had sailed on her in the old days when she raced against the *Bluenose* in the

famous International Fishermen's Races.

Even then, the topsail schooners had to take their engines out for the races. So you can see that this new yarn, which describes the adventures of a topsail schooner fighting for her life against the powered vessels, is, in a way, a sort of casting back to days that are no more. It follows that a writer who didn't go to sea until the first World War is something of a greenhorn, as they say in Gloucester, as far as topsail schooners are concerned. However, life aboard the schooners is exactly the same as in the old days, except for the fact that a 300 h.p. engine now does the work of the great mainsails and fore-sails.

The conflict between the dory trawlers, which kill fish by hook and line, and the draggers, which kill fish by long nets dragged across the bottom, is exactly as described in "Captains Don't Cry." In the year of the *Columbia's* death, for instance, all the fleets fishing in South Channel-Georges killed 250,000,000 pounds of fish and didn't have a great deal of trouble doing it. I was with the Gloucester fleet on three occasions that year and there was an abundance of fish. But the trawler has done its work. As in the North Sea fisheries, the nets have wantonly slaughtered billions of baby fish. A market has been developed for baby haddock because of the rise of the filleting industry in which the big companies market small slices of fish. This has led to raids on nursery grounds and has led to the use of small-mesh net which kills undersized fish. The slaughter has been so great that in the past season, despite an increased intensity of fishing, the catch on Georges Bank has not been greater than 60,000,000 pounds. Two years ago I was on a vessel that went all the way to the Grand Bank itself before it could get a stock of groundfish.

In my opinion, unless there is legislation passed to force the trawlers to use a larger mesh in the nets, there will come a day when it will no longer be profitable to fish on the Yankee banks and on the Grand Banks.

(Continued on page 8)

ELECTRICIANS... RADIO MEN See These Great Pay Boosters FREE!

I'LL SEND YOU MY
FAMOUS REFERENCE BOOKS ON

7 DAYS FREE TRIAL



H. C. Lewis, Pres. Coyne Electrical School

FREE WITH SET



Here's a great triple-header **EXTRA VALUE** I'll give you **FREE** with the 3-volume set if you act at once: (1) Big book of 150 shop prints, motor and radio diagrams and how to read them; (2) One-year consultation service by mail on your technical problems; (3) Subscription to **Technical News Bulletins** — ALL FREE with the Reference Set.

TROUBLE SHOOTING MANUAL

612 Big Pages, Hundreds of pictures and diagrams. New 1944 edition.

PRACTICAL ELECTRONICS

New! Latest miracle of science is made easy to understand. Only book of its kind now on sale!

ELECTRICAL DICTIONARY

Over 1100 Electrical and radio terms defined and illustrated. Needed by every electrical worker or student.

AMAZING 3 VOLUME REFERENCE SET

Yes! . . . Truly amazing! These 3 up-to-the-minute volumes actually contain more material than many sets selling for 2 or 3 times the price. Covers entire field of electricity and radio—motors, dynamos, auto and aviation electricity, air conditioning, refrigeration and hundreds of other subjects, complete, thorough, authoritative. Equally valuable for beginner or old timer—for home study or on-the-job problems. **See this at my risk!** Send coupon below—keep set 7 days! Then either return it or send \$3 and \$3 a month until \$13.95 is paid. Cash price \$12.55 saves you 10% if sent within 7 days after books reach you.

TROUBLE-SHOOTING MANUAL

At last, the thoroughly practical Manual long needed by men in **ELECTRICITY, RADIO and REFRIGERATION**. Nothing else like it. Saves you time—helps win advancement and bigger pay. Really 4 GREAT BOOKS IN ONE, 600 page volume. (1) New step-by-step Trouble-Shooting course. (2) 500 Shop Prints. (3) Electrical-Radio Dictionary. (4) Spare-time job suggestions. Examine 7 days at my risk and then return it or send \$3 and \$3 a month until \$8.95 is paid. Cash price \$8.00 saves you 10%.

ELECTRONICS—NEW—AUTHORITATIVE

Get ready for big things to come with my sensational new **Electronics Manual**—ONLY BOOK OF ITS KIND! A gold-mine of up-to-the-minute facts, graphic illustrations and easy-to-understand diagrams. Describes each type of tube—its uses, installation, servicing for electric devices. Get up-to-date on this new development that experts say will revolutionize post-war industry. Special introductory price \$4.95 (Cash or C.O.D.)

ELECTRICAL DICTIONARY

Simply, exactly defines over 1100 electrical and radio terms—contains many useful electrical and radio diagrams. A great help to beginner or veteran. Only 50c postpaid.

SEND NO MONEY:

I will ship any or all of the above books on 7 DAYS FREE TRIAL. Look them over and use them—study them. If not 100% satisfied, ship them back. Otherwise pay for them as indicated in coupon. If your order totals \$5.00 or more you may pay \$3.00 within 7 days and \$3.00 a month. Rush coupon.

COYNE ELECTRICAL SCHOOL
Dept. C4-3R7
500 S. Paulina St. Chicago 12

FREE TRIAL COUPON - NO MONEY DOWN

H. C. Lewis, President—Coyne Electrical School
500 S. Paulina St., Dept. C4-3R7 Chicago 12, Illinois

Send me the books checked at the right on 7 DAYS FREE TRIAL. I'll either return them in 7 days and owe you nothing or pay for them according to the plan I select as outlined above.

Name..... Age.....

Address.....

City..... Zone..... State.....

Name of Employer.....

- ☐ COYNE 3 VOL. REFERENCE SET: Price complete \$13.95 payments, or \$12.55 cash. BOOK of 150 shop prints included FREE. Includes one year Free Consultation Service and Technical News Bulletins.
- ☐ COYNE TROUBLE-SHOOTING MANUAL: (1 VOL.) Price \$8.95 payments, or \$8.00 cash. Includes one year Free Consultation Service and Technical News Bulletins.
- ☐ COYNE MANUAL OF ELECTRONICS: (1 VOL.) Price \$4.95. Includes one year Free Technical Bulletins.
- ☐ 150 SHOP PRINTS AND MOTOR DIAGRAMS: (1 VOL.) Price \$1.95. (Free with reference set or can be bought separately.)
- ☐ COYNE ELECTRICAL & RADIO DICTIONARY (1 VOL.) Price 50c.

If you wish to pay the postman the cash price when books are delivered, check here. ☐ Same 7-Day Money-Back Guarantee of Satisfaction.

(Continued from page 6)

ONLY two recruits to the ranks of our Writers' Brigade this month. About A. B. Shiffrin, first of the duo, who gives us the off-trail adventure of Copper and Sam Fisher on page 122, we have been able to glean only the following—

Although he was born in a village near Minsk (which was once Polish, is now German, and will soon be Russian), by the time he was nine years old he was playing shortstop for the Brownsville Shrimps on the sandlots of Brooklyn in territory recently dominated by an outfit known as Murder Incorporated. Said corporation has been dissolved, but Shiffrin still lives there. He is happy to remember that Danny Kaye comes from the same neighborhood and that once, when he was still in knee pants, he strolled along Sutter Avenue with Clifton Fadiman who recited "Gunga Din" at the top of his voice, startling the pushcart peddlers who were reciting something else.

In recent years Shiffrin has divided his time between book writing and book selling. As a dealer in rare books he has sold items to a clientele that includes President Roosevelt and Chief Justice Stone. He once sold a little book published in 1917, for \$1,000. He won't reveal the name of the book because he hopes to find another copy some day. Within the last few months he discovered and now owns the last copies of the excessively rare "Mark Twain's Memory Builder" which have been missing for 50 years, and which experts regard as the rarest of Mark Twain first editions.

As a writer, Shiffrin has published two novels, his short stories have been reprinted and triple-starred in the O'Brien Anthologies; his children poems were a feature in F.P.A.'s Conning Tower; he has written for radio and for Hollywood; and he has just sold a play which is scheduled for an early Broadway production.

AND Royal Ornan Shreve, who dug out the evidence to prove in "Symmes' Hole" that there was just as much wackiness in Congress a hundred and twenty-five years ago as there is today, renders the following succinct account of his career—

Born in small Mid-western village where father was leading merchant. Five years of college at Illinois Wesleyan and University of Chicago. While at latter spent summer doing field work in archaeology in Mexico. Turned down offer of graduate scholarship because of paternal objections.

Followed varied career in country journalism, traveling accountant, abstractor of land-titles, cotton planter in Deep South, finally more or less well earned leisure in California.

Military record nil save for brevet of "Colonel" conferred in South, presumably because of prematurely white hair.

Travel, in addition to Mexico, nearly all States west of Mississippi, half those to east.

Hobby, what may be dubbed the minutiae of American History, for which aforesaid leisure and the libraries of Los Angeles have furnished opportunity. Result, one book published—"The Finished Scoundrel," the story of General James Wilkinson, the traitorous second Commander-in-Chief of the United States Army—and another for which hope to find publisher someday—a history of the Vice-Presidents. By-product of the latter, the discovery that some V.P.'s. had some rather startling adventures, of which Colonel Dick Johnson's sponsorship of Captain Symmes was one.

MODY C. BOATRIGHT, whose "tall tales" of Pecos Bill appeared in these pages a few years ago, is, as you may recall, on the faculty of the University of Texas and one of the editors of the Texas Folklore Society publications. Still ferretting out bits of genuine Americana, he turns now from the cow country to the oil fields and introduces us to the fabulous Gib Morgan, who was no myth but whose flow of oral fabrication gushed as no wildcat well ever did, to give him a place in the front rank of our native folklore parade, alongside such giants as Paul Bunyan, John Henry and Pecos Bill himself.

Of Morgan's career as a driller and liar par excellence Mr. Boatright writes—

The circumstances of Gib's early life fitted him for the role that made him famous. He grew up with the oil industry. He was born in Clarion County, Pennsylvania, in 1842, seventeen years before Colonel Drake put down the first well drilled for oil in the United States. When Drake's well came in, Gib was living at Emlenton, less than forty miles from Titusville, where a museum now marks the birthplace of the oil industry. The country in which he grew up was essentially a pioneer country. The counties of western Pennsylvania were off the beaten path of westward migration and were sparsely populated. But even so, there were more people than could well make a living. Much of the land was poor and the farms were far from markets. The people farmed, logged for a few large lumbering companies, and occasionally rafted on the Allegheny River. Poorest of all were the men who lived in miserable huts in the woods and stripped hemlock bark for the tanneries. In the folklore of the region their position was similar to that of the turpentine gatherers of Georgia and the squatters of Arkansas.

(Continued on page 133)

"THIS WISDOM MUST DIE!"



Truths That Have Been Denied Struggling Humanity

FOR every word that has left the lips of bishops or statesmen to enlighten man, a thousand have been withheld. For every book publicly exposed to the inquiring mind, one hundred more have been suppressed—*damned to oblivion*. Each year of progress has been wilfully delayed centuries. Wisdom has had to filter through biased, secret sessions or ecclesiastical council meetings, where high dignitaries of state and church alone proclaimed what man should know.

Are you prepared to demand the hidden facts of life? Will you continue to believe that you are not capable of weighing the worth of knowledge that concerns your personal freedom and happiness? Realize that much that can make your life more *understandable* and *livable* has been left unexplained or intentionally destroyed. At first by word of mouth only, and now by private discourses, are *revealed* those truths which secret brotherhoods preserved in ancient temples and hidden sanctuaries, from those who sought to selfishly deprive humanity of them.

THIS free BOOK OF EXPLANATION

Let the Rosicrucians, one of these ancient brotherhoods of learning, tell you about these amazing truths, and explain how you, too, like thousands of others, may now use them to enjoy the fullness of life. The Rosicrucians, (not a religious organization) invite you to use the coupon opposite and receive the FREE copy of the fascinating, Sealed Book, with its startling tale of *self help*.

The ROSICRUCIANS (AMORC)
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA; U. S. A.



Scribe I. J. N.
THE ROSICRUCIANS (AMORC)
Rosicrucian Park, San Jose, California, U.S.A.

Please send me your FREE Sealed Book. I am sincerely interested in learning how I may receive these long-concealed facts of life.

Name.....

Address.....

CAPTAINS DON'T CRY

By EDMUND GILLIGAN

CAPTAIN HARDEGON brought the *Moon Hawk* into Gloucester at dusk with a hundred and thirty thousand pounds of redfish, which was the best stock the dragger had taken that season. The voyage had been a short one—only six days—and he was glad of it because he found no pleasure in killing redfish. It was too easy. But the job had been a godsend to him. When he went aboard, he had just five dollars left in his pocket. Now he had four hundred.

As soon as the lumpers had started the fish moving out of her pens, he packed his gear and got off the vessel. He went up the wharf, crossed through Marlin's Yard, and then turned down again into the Doonan Wharf, a story-and-a-half of sheds and lofts with a plank

roadway running along its side to the water's edge.

On either hand there were other wharves and sail-lofts, all cluttered and filled with spars and dories of ancient schooners and hulks of abandoned vessels. A hundred masts stood against the darkening sky. Fishing vessels moved in and out, their engines shouting and whispering, their Bank-sails falling and rising. At the fish companies' wharves, where the draggers were discharging their fares, arc lights glared and gangs of lumpers roared and cursed under the swinging baskets.

Captain Hardegon jerked open the door of the first sail-loft and climbed the rickety stairs. At the top landing, he switched on a light and glanced anxiously around the big room. An

ILLUSTRATED
BY
GORDON GRANT





"Along the southern edge of Banquereau we baited up and made the set. The men came aboard for dinner with the trawls in slack water."

unfinished net lay in dark folds along a wooden stage. It was made of prime manila, a scarce article in Gloucester at that time. More extraordinary was the size of the mesh. It measured over five inches, which was almost twice as large as the mesh used on the Gloucester and Boston draggers.

He flung his gear down into a corner and turned back toward the long folds of twine. He was fond of that net. And proud of it. You could tell that by the calm expression on his thin, black-browed face as he ran his scarred fingers over the manila.

Suddenly he clapped his hand against the

roll of bills in his pocket and said aloud, "And now I'll finish you and show these babies how to fish like honest men!"

He picked up a twine-wrapped bundle that lay in a corner, switched off the light and went banging down the stairs.

A pair of dorymen were coming up the Doonan Wharf. He hailed them and asked, "Any news of the *Golden Hind*, chums?"

One of them replied, "No, Dan. The *Thebaud* spoke her on Emerald Bank ten days ago and there's not a word of her since."

"She kill any fish?" Hardegon asked.

"Nary a one!" answered the doryman. And his chum added in a sour tone, "As usual! They'll come off that vessel owing her money again. Just like last time."

They trudged away into the twilight.

"Where's her owner?" Captain Hardegon called after them. "Anywhere around?"

One of them jerked his hand toward the lighted window of the little chandler's shop at the head of the wharf. "In there, worrying, or I miss my guess, Captain."

Hardegon took a step toward the window, then swung on his heel and walked slowly down to the end of the wharf. He looked across the harbor and out to sea. There was more light out there.

The last long rays of the sun were still pouring down from the clouds. Outside the point, he could barely make out a warship and an escort of destroyers on an eastward course. Nearer, two little gill-netters struck through the heavy seas beyond the point and ran toward the harbor. A searchlight at the point laid a beam on each one, held it long enough for recognition and went dark. Farther down the coast, an orange-colored handlamp began to flicker from a vessel lying close to Norman's Woe. He studied the blinker, repeated the first word, which was *pass*, and then lost its meaning in the swift code jumble.

A tide of rose-colored light ran from the back of the world, dyed the purple sky, and splashed into the darkness beyond the twin towers of Thatcher's Light. He searched the sea there eagerly and said, "Lord! Lord! What's keeping her now?"

A brilliant ray of sunlight struck swiftly across the sky. It flashed in such splendor that it seemed like a jag of lightning. Far out over the heaving Atlantic, the ray pierced a rolling bank of black cloud and spun downward into the sea. It struck a white sheet of foam or canvas and made such a vivid burst of color there that Captain Hardegon cried out in surprise.

He jumped to the stringpiece and stared into that welter of foam and crisscross light. A moment later, he clearly saw a topsail gleam and vanish. It passed so quickly that, at once, he doubted his eyes. If it had been a sail, then the vessel could be none other than the *Golden*

Hind; for she was the only schooner under sail out of Gloucester, the only vessel from Cape Ann to Fortune Bay that carried topsails to her work.

Captain Hardegon tried hard to see through the gloom and tossing spray. But he could make nothing out. To the eastward, the light of a big dragger began to show. She was also coming home.

He hurried up the wharf. He turned onto the platform that ran under the Doonan office window. There he paused, not being sure that he had actually seen the *Hind*. He glanced through the uncurtained window and saw the tall young figure, back turned and face uplifted toward a painting of the *Golden Hind* that hung over the mantel of the old-fashioned fireplace, in which driftwood burned in blue and yellow gleams. Straddled in doryman's cowhide boots, reaching halfway to the knee, and clad in doryman's woolen trousers and blue woolen shirt, the motionless figure stared at the picture, thumbs hooked in belt, hands laid out on the hips. Hardegon could see the grimy, broken nails and the white scar, deep-cut and shaped like a codhook, on the left hand.

The flames lighted the painting. Carrying a whole mainsail, and topsails, too, the schooner leaped before the northeaster, fair for her in the swift passage to the Wednesday market at Boston, where a hundred thousand pounds of fish brought more dollars than two hundred thousand pounds a day later. The vessel gave a good showing of her old-time coloring: the ancient bottle-green from waist to waterline, buff decks, blue waterways, and white mast-heads.

Captain Hardegon lifted his hand to knock at the pane. At that moment, he heard a burst of uproarious laughter behind him. He whirled and called out.



FOUR old dorymen stood there in the shadows, staring at him. He could hardly make them out, but in a little while he saw that they were men of the old fleet, the men bred to sail. These were the men who had filled the old Yankee till with hook-and-line for centuries past. They had worked from dories and had been driven off the Grand Banks by the new style of fishing with great nets. Now these dorymen were on the beach for good. Brash draggermen sometimes spoke of them as "pick-up bums."

The leader of the dorymen called out, "Good evening, Captain! Salubrious, is it not, for a post-prandial stroll? The shank of the evening, as the vulgar say. What?" He roared again in laughter and gave a dandy's twist to a non-existent mustache.

Captain Hardegon laughed, too. He said, "Good evening to you, Ambrose Cameron. What's the story?"

He was surprised to see them on the Doonan Wharf, and his interest grew when he saw them put their heads together for an answer.

Ambrose Cameron bowed grandly. He was no shack of a man. His head was like the crest of a wave, white and high. He stood three inches over Hardegon. He was about sixty years old. He had a wonderful history, a history written in scars and wrinkles on his leathery face. His history was the history of the world. Scar for scar, line for line. He had a great gift of the gab, which was one of the reasons why the others had chosen him to do their talking. He was a linguist of note in Gloucester. He could speak Hog-Latin, Yarmouth French, two Fortune Bay dialects, and both kinds of English—Boston and American.

Ambrose waved his hand to his chums and, turning toward Captain Hardegon, said, "The owner's sent for us. Sent for me and three of my chums. There's something hard to be done and we've come to do it, Captain."

The door of the shop opened and the old doryman sang out, "Ah, good evening, Cap'n Nora!"

At this, Captain Hardegon laughed again. He let it jump out in such a handsome peal that the dorymen looked merrily at him and they laughed, too.

Captain Hardegon ran his fist against his eyes and repeated, "Captain!" and added, "Has it come to this?"

The young woman rebuked him in mock severity. "Why not? Where've you been, chum?" She laughed and took his hand and added, "Glad to see you back, Dan. What did you do?"

"One hundred and thirty thousand."

"Ground-fish?"

"Redfish."

"Ah!" She could tell by the look on his face that he didn't like to say that word, but she was obviously glad to hear anything like a hundred thousand pounds. She spoke to the dorymen and beckoned them all to come into her office.

There she turned up the wick of the old schooner lamp that hung from the blackened beam. And the increase of light showed that she was, indeed, very much of a doryman and fit to be called captain in the easy longshore manner of the dorymen. She was as tall as Hardegon and had the same hard, pinched look about her face that he had. It was easy to tell that the two of them were suffering from the same thing—poverty; and that they were fighting the same battle to make a living off the Grand Banks. Hardegon set his bundle in a dark corner and moved to where he could watch the light play across Nora's face.

Old Ambrose didn't want to give up the "captain" game at once. He said gravely, "And why can't she be called 'captain,' Dan? Ah! I've seen her do it! I was aboard the *Hind* coming

down from Gut o' Canso that time." He pulled his cronies nearer with his blue glance and said, "When Jerry was took sick in the belly. You mind the time, chums?"

"Yes. Oh, ay! We mind the time. A captain sure!" Their gray heads nodded in agreement.

Nora took a step closer to Ambrose. "I asked you to come here because I've got a job for you. For all of you, and for one other you must find. A man that knows a main-sheet from a petticoat."

They straightened their backs and drew up their hands as if they meant to show her what those hands had done and could do again.

Hardegon said, "I'll step outside, if you wish, Nora."

"Never mind! I've had no secrets from you, Dan. And there'll be none now. I would—"

He interrupted her. "I think I made out the *Hind* coming along by Thatcher's. I'm not sure."



SHE took a deep breath and let it out in such a rush that he could tell how anxious she had been.

She spoke again to the dorymen.

"This is what I had to say to you."

When she does come in, if you've a mind for a little hard sailing—"

"Gorry, but we have! We have, indeed, Cap'n!"

"—to help the old *Hind* and me, then get your gear aboard her before sun-up. And keep it cozy, chums. Get down aft of the pens where the old sail-locker is and don't stir or smoke until she's away."

Old Ambrose turned proudly to the others and said, "Do ye cotton to that, my good friends? Don't stir or smoke or make a mousey noise until she's away!"

He banged out the word "away" in such joyous style that his chums laughed louder than they had laughed before.

Cap'n Doonan, her hard hands stretched out again on her hips, watched them shrewdly, measured their hardiness and knew that they were the men who could go with her the way she had to go. She said, "There'll be a good piece of change in this for us all. If it goes well. If we get away with it. If it doesn't go—there'll be nothing but your grub."

"Grub's enough! A piece of change if all goes well, miss. But grub's enough."

"And nary a word! Or you'll ball things up."

"'Tis us, Cap'n Nora—'tis us that can talk when talk's needed and can give naught but silence when that's needed." By a lordly wave of his hand, he gave her his assurance and led the others to the door.

When the door had closed behind them, Hardegon said to her, "I'm sorry I wasn't here to say good-by to your grandfather."

"He was sorry to die without saying a word to you, Dan."

"How did he go?"



Nora

"Easy and calm. He was for it. He had enough of worry and enough of these eternal waits for the *Hind* to come home as she used to come—with a hundred thousand pounds in her pens."

"You are alone now." He reached for her hand and touched it gently. "Did he speak of me at the end?"

"Aye! He did, Dan. Of you and your father. And for you he left a fine thing. Come here now and I'll give it to you with his love." She turned toward a great rosewood cupboard in the corner.

Before he moved, he asked, "The schooner is yours, Nora?"

"Mine."

"To do what you please with her?"

"Yes, Dan. To do what I please. He had no other wish for her. None at all. Except that money should never be borrowed on her and that she should keep on fishing."

She opened the cupboard door and handed him her grandfather's old spy-glass. "With the

old man's dear love, Dan, and his last wish for you—a life of joy with it on the Grand Banks."

He took the great brass-bound tube in his hands. He let his head bow a little over it. When he looked up again, she saw that his eyes had filled with tears. He whispered, "'Tis old! Old and beautiful. I'll treasure this, Nora, as best I may."

He said then, "We'll go down and watch for the *Hind*. We'll soon know if it was she I saw coming in."

She flung a jacket over her shoulders and they hurried down through the shadows.



THE searchlight at the Point again pierced the spray and gloom. In its first jerky meandering, the beam struck on two large vessels, then settled on the first one, a dragger.

She said, "The *Doubloon*. And Parran."

"Aye! Captain Parran!" An expression of disgust twisted his thin lips. He said bitterly, "Another one of them."

She knew well enough the source of his quick fury. Captain Parran and others in the fleet had been making big money with their draggers. It was a kind of money that Hardegon didn't like, because it was made by catching cod and other ground-fish in small-meshed nets that killed masses of small fish. Hardegon and other young skippers couldn't tolerate the indiscriminate slaughter of young haddock and cod, because they foresaw the day when there wouldn't be enough spawn on the Banks. In his own lifetime, the draggers had driven most of the hook-and-line fishermen off the Banks. And he had seen the catch on Georges Bank cut from three hundred million pounds a season to fifty million.

Nora, watching his angry face, had no wish to get him off on that tack just then. She asked, "You like the *Moon Hawk*, Dan?"

"She's a sound vessel."

"You'll get a chance to go skipper of her again?"

"Not for a long time. I was lucky to get one trip. Macklin's back from the hospital. He'll take her now."

Another searchlight picked up the *Doubloon*. They stopped talking and watched her. She was a handsome, broad-beamed vessel, shining with new paint. The light revealed her star-board net hoisted against her mainmast to dry out. Her port net lay in a dark fold between the gallows. Nora could just make out the crew, already dressed in shore-going togs, gathered near the main hatch. She saw, too, that the dragger rode deep in the water. She whispered, "Two hundred thousand more for him."

Captain Hardegon made no reply.

The beam drew away from the *Doubloon* and dallied upon the second vessel. She was the *Mary and Martha*, a schooner of the old

times that had been launched in Essex a year after the *Golden Hind* slipped down the ways. Like the *Hind*, she had killed fish for many years by hook-and-line, handled by dories. She had been converted into a dragger two summers ago. The nests where her dories had once lain were empty now. Two of her dories were cradled on her pilot-house. Her towing gear was braced against her empty main-mast.

Her foresail, which was the only canvas she now carried, came down while they watched. The old schooner also showed by her deep and sluggish approach that her pens were full, that the long nets had been dragged across the ocean bottom to good purpose.

The vessels moved slowly to Independence Wharf, where lights flashed on and throngs of men came forward. They were owners waiting for news of rich hauls, and lumpers ready to empty the pens.

Captain Hardegon flung up his hand in a rough gesture toward the open sea beyond the Point. It was nearly full dark there now. A green lamp glimmered. The shadow of a plunging hull moved with it. Above that shadow, a spread of white sail shot off gleams of light.

He said, "There she is! There's your *Golden Hind*, Nora." His voice had changed from gentleness to sharpness, so that his meaning became one of mockery. It was a mockery touched with sorrow. It really meant, "And much good may she do you!"

The *Hind's* owner replied, "She's falling onto the other tack. They won't let her in yet."

The *Hind's* green light vanished behind the Point. A few minutes later, both her lights showed briefly and she passed seaward.

Nora said, "We'll go back to the shop. We've plenty of time yet."

He stepped in front of her and laid his hand on her arm. "No! We'll wait here. I've something to say to you about your business."

"What?"

His tone changed to a rougher quality. "You tell me what you were doing in Nova Scotia. What are you up to now? Is that what you want those dorymen for?"

"Who told you I was in Nova Scotia?"

"I spoke the *Pennypacker* on German Bank. The skipper said he saw you there. In the dark of night."

A look of alarm crossed her face. She gave him one of her shrewd glances and quickly asked, "Did he figure out what I was doing there?"

"No."

"I came back on the O. K. Line."

"I know that, too. But why?"

She hesitated a moment and then poured out her story.

The death of her grandfather had left the family's affairs in worse shape than she expected. There was no money. In recent years,



as Captain Hardegon knew, the *Golden Hind* had eaten up in fruitless voyages all the handsome profits that she had earned in the days of sail. Old Captain Doonan had clung on to the ancient tradition, hoping that a few good stocks would save the vessel and save Nora from want. He had stubbornly refused to put an engine into the schooner, even when every other owner in Gloucester had done so. He had refused to give up the dories, although the *Hind* was now the last vessel to carry working dories out of Gloucester.

"I know this well enough, Nora," said Captain Hardegon sharply. "I know your need of money. I can let you have a couple of hundred, but it won't do you any good. It's like pouring money down the drain."

She made an impatient gesture. "You want me to make the *Hind* into a dragger and put your big-mesh nets aboard her?"

"I've told you that often enough. Dories and hooks will be the death of her."

"I'm not saying I'll do it. Or that I can do it, after what the old captain said to me when he lay dying. Whether I convert her or not, I've got to have money. To put an engine into her

and get towing gear, I've got to have thirty thousand dollars!"

"Aye, and more!"

"Well, I'm just the one that can get it. And that's why I was in Nova Scotia."

"Spill it, then."

"I'm going back to Shelburne and make the money—half of it—right there."

He looked at her in astonishment. "How?"

"Do you remember the *Western Star*?"

He nodded. "I raced the *Hind* against her often enough."

"Know what happened to her?"

"No, I don't. And what difference does it make, anyway?"

"Grandfather remembered."

"Well?"

"She's lying in the Roseway River. Forgotten by everybody—but me."

"And what are you going to do with her?"

"Buy her for a song."

"Why, for heaven's sake?"

She laughed in his face. "Her keel!"

"Ah!"

"Thirty thousand pounds of metal. Hidden from all eyes, except ours. In a hull that's been rotting away at Pinkey Bannister's wharf."

He roared with laughter. "It'll kill Pinkey!"

"Who cares? After what he did to the *Hind* and to Grandfather four seasons ago, I don't care what happens to him."

He became grave again and did some quick figuring. "You've got twelve thousand dollars' worth of metal there."

"Fifteen thousand dollars' worth." She added bluntly, "Dan, I've sold that keel already."

"Who bought?"

"An agent for the Boston Navy Yard. Hackett."

"Did you tell him where she was?"

"Not I!" She gave him some time to think it over and then asked: "What's your opinion of it, Dan?"

"Tis sound. Can she be handled at all?"

"She's taken some water in all this time. But not too much. She can be handled. That's why I went up there. I boarded her in the dark of night and made sure of it."

"Any of her gear left?"

"Yes. And her spars are on the wharf alongside her."

"And the men to sail her out?"

She waved her hand toward the town. "You saw them."

He said, "You've got your nerve. I wish you luck. If you need me—count me in."

"I'm obliged to you, Dan, for saying that."



THE schooner's lights showed beyond the harbor entrance now. She came nearer at a slow pace until the searchlight at the Point found her. Her mainsail came down at that moment. They could see the dories piled

in their nests, the tubs of trawl that carried her thousands of hooks. Presently the schooner moved onward. The light from the Point had revealed her clearly enough to prove to her owner that she had failed again. It was plain that the *Hind* had returned as light as she had gone. Lighter, in fact, because her tons of costly ice and stores had been consumed.

Nora Doonan sighed and said listlessly, "Dan, I could cry."

He answered roughly, "Captains don't cry. And you're as much of a captain as a woman can be." He stayed silent a moment and then added, "I have some news for you. For you and your *Hind*."

She took her eyes off the distant schooner and said, "I'll be glad to have it. What is it?"

"All this—all this work and worry and being broke—why? You can put an end to it easy enough."

"How?"

"I can get you one hundred and ten thousand dollars in cash for the *Hind*."

She caught her breath. "One hundred and ten?"

"One hundred and ten. All of it. Pushed across a desk at the bank tomorrow morning."

"Whose money? Parran's?"

He yelled in anger. "Parran's? I wouldn't touch a dollar of that guy's dough if I was starving! You're on his books already, aren't you?"

"I am. But not the *Hind*."

"You can't draw a line between you and the *Hind*."

"I've drawn it. Grandfather did, too. It's our word, not the *Hind*, that's been pledged." She repeated her question. "Whose money, then?"

"The same syndicate that bought the *Laura* for the West Indies trade."

"Ah, the one that bought the *Laura*! And where is she now, Dan? Tell me that!"

"Broken on a coral reef."

"So I hear, Dan. So I hear. I saw her old skipper today on Ben Pine's new wharf. There was a dreadful look in his eyes, Dan. Forty years on the *Laura* and now she's breaking up on an Indies reef." She shook her head in sadness.

"You know my answer, Dan. It would be the old captain's, too. I want no hundred thousand dollars. None of it! None of it! Do you hear me, Dan Hardegan? What is going on in the West Indies that makes a hundred Yankee tons worth so much? My grandfather wanted to know that, too. Do you know what he said when I read him the piece in the *Gloucester Times* about the *Laura* going to the Indies? 'Queer!' he said, 'queer! 'Tis like sending a fine woman out to walk the streets!' That's what he said, Dan." She stamped her heavy boot on the stringpiece. "No! The *Hind*'s mine now and mine she remains!"

After peering into the darkness for a new

sign of her schooner, she added in a gentler tone: "If I thought you meant it, Dan, I'd let her go. But I'd never speak to you again. Or to myself either, for that matter."

"And to her skipper? To Roades? You'd never speak to him again either, would you?" He whirled around to face her and shouted in his sudden fury. "You know if you did sell—he'd have to go along, don't you? That's the deal they make. Vessel, skipper and crew—and an engine through her deck at last? Don't you know it? Don't you?"

"I didn't know it. No, Dan."

"Who'd you think would take her to the Indies? Yourself, maybe?"

"I could, Dan. I could."

"You could! You could!" He turned on his bitters mockery again and gave her a taste of it. "What did you think the moment I spoke of it? The hundred thousand? Or what? You tell me!"

The *Golden Hind's* horn blew loudly out of the darkness. Nora listened to its echoes and then let her own voice show its waterfront strength. "Keep a civil tongue in your head, Dan-Hardegan, or it'll be the worse for you!"

"You're not dressing down a lumper now, miss!"

"Neither are you, Captain!"

He smashed his hands together in his rage. "You stand there defending Jack Roades—a

blockhead who's running you and the *Hind* to ruin. There's something damn queer—"

"I defend nobody. Jack Roades needs no defending by me or anybody else. He can handle a vessel and that's—"

"Aye! He can! A vessel—and other things, too!"

This was too much for Nora. She jumped toward him, lifted her hand as if she meant to knock him galley-west. But even in that dim light she could see his eyes. She halted in her stride. "Ah, Dan, the wind's hauling around to the same old quarter!" She flung her hand over his shoulder again. "Cut it out, will you, chum?"

He held out a little longer, gave her an unwavering, hard glance that showed plainly the jealous anger and suspicion that Roades' name had drummed up. Then he surrendered as he'd known he'd have to. "O. K., Captain," he said.

The horn blew over the water and suddenly the *Golden Hind* glided out of the darkness and came on in silence, shooting to the wharf and growing as she came. They had stripped her on the way up the harbor. Mainsail first, then jib and jumbo. Her spars moved steadily against the black clouds over the harbor. The white mastheads shone like huge candles on an unlighted altar. Her crossrees glistened with dew.

The skipper had the helm. He stood hidden

**You feel right on the button, man—
Get quick shaves that look spick-and-span
When low-priced Thin Gillette's your blade—
For comfort, too, it's sure top-grade!**



**Outlast Ordinary Blades
Two to One**



Produced By The Maker Of The Famous Gillette Blue Blade



from clear sight by the darkness surging against the wheel. He lifted his arm and sang out, "Away with it, boys!"

Her foresail came smoothly down. Her masts, which were the tallest ever set in Essex, seemed taller now than ever before. The night and its vaulting shadows increased her beauty, made her powerful, immense. And made it easier to understand how men might become enthralled by her grace and strive to keep her so, no matter what the cost.

Hardeggon grasped Nora's arm. "Promise me this one thing, Nora. Quick!"

"I promise, Dan!"

"Tell no one about the *Western Star*. Not a soul until we take her out."

She knew by this that he meant the men aboard the *Hind* and especially Captain Roades, the man she was to marry. Nevertheless, she gave her word. "I'll tell no one," she said.

CHAPTER II

THE CURSE OF JOHN CORKERY



THE *Hind's* lively place slowed into a glide. The cook, still in his blowing apron, took the green lantern down out of her rigging, according to the *Hind's* tradition that gave him charge of her lights. His eyes shot out

two green rays. He puffed his cheeks and blew against the wick. The tide struck against the *Hind's* bow and set up a splashing there. Captain Roades had nicely judged the drive left in her by the wind. He gave her a spoke or two.

The cook took down the port lantern and blew out of puffed and reddened cheeks.

Captain Hardeggon grasped the line that fell in a curl at his feet. He gave it a turn on the spile and made ready to check the schooner. The gang forward heaved a line over. Nora seized it and gave it a loose turn.

Captain Roades left the wheel and came forward. There the light was stronger. He stood at her rail, watching her last movement with care.

Once again, the silence returned, a silence so perfect that to Nora, astride the stringpiece, it seemed strained and unnatural for a returning vessel. Nothing marred that silence, except the rattle of the tide, until the old dory trawler at last settled in her place and gave out a sigh that seemed profound and sad; as if she wished to say, "Here I am! Home again—and a shame it is in my old age I come home to you empty."

Her sighing and the portentous silence reached into Nora's heart and kept her speechless, although she was anxious to speak, anxious to hear Roades's voice again after a long absence.

He stepped down from the break and stood near the port dory-nest. He pulled off his sou'west and wiped the dew from his forehead. He struck his hand several times against his matted yellow hair. Then he looked directly up at Nora. And still he didn't speak. He didn't have to speak. His eyes spoke for him. They were dark with weariness and toil, failure and anger.

He made a slight change in his straddled pose. In a way too subtle for naming, this change shook off some of his weariness. It was an assertion of his physical strength, a display of his powerful, tall body. Even more, for he thus revealed an inner determination, a hint of arrogance, which meant, "Bear in mind that I am captain!" He became dominant.

He also became alone. Nora saw that he was alone. No man stood near him. She dimly saw their faces, their unstirring figures. She perceived that they had left their captain alone to face her. This was a new thing.

Her desire to speak broke down her desire not to learn anything more that night. The disaster of empty pens was enough for one day. She sang out cheerfully, "Welcome home, the *Golden Hind*! Hey! Are you all ghosts that sail her?"

A moment of deeper silence passed. After that, a man answered from the darkness amidships.

He said, "No, miss." His words ceased, then began again. "There be only one ghost aboard the *Hind*."

The doryman's words were spoken sadly. They gaffed her hard. She flung up her head and let her mouth suck in the salt air quickly. Her hands had been held out in welcome. She now joined them over her heart. She repeated to herself, over and over again, the words, "No, miss. There be only one ghost aboard the *Hind*."

A man among them cursed. His words, too, were terrible to hear, because they were solemn words, spoken from a man's sorrowful heart. They became more terrible because his curses were laid upon the *Golden Hind*, upon her captain, and upon all those that sent her dory-trawling over stormy seas, with hooked fish to haul and rip and gut, and sail to handle night and day.

Nora couldn't help crying out. She sounded like a frightened child suddenly bereft of something dear.

Captain Hardegon caught her arm. He closed his fingers briefly upon her sleeve. Then he mounted the stringpiece, looked down at the silent, unstirring captain below and waited for him to speak; as, by rights, he should have spoken in such a matter. Nevertheless, Captain Roades did not break his pose. He didn't even turn his head toward the curser. No rebuke came from his lips. It was plain that he intended to make none.

Captain Hardegon bent down. In astonishment, he judged the captain's expression. He found nothing new there, found no change in the angry set of his jaw or in his haughty air.

Thereupon, Captain Hardegon raised his head and shouted, "You there! You in the lee of the jib!"

"Yes, Captain."

"You pipe down! Do you hear? Stop up that jaw of yours or—by the Lord Harry—I'll pin your ears back for you!" He took a step sideways to be nearer the man. He cried out again, "Are you a blasted greenhorn? To curse aboard a vessel now? Isn't she bad enough off yet?"

His passionate appeal to the ancient taboo, which held strong sway on sailing-vessels, caused a murmuring among the fishermen.

The curser walked out of the shadows. He moved, indeed, like a shadow; so much like one that it could be almost imagined that he was up to some deviltry, that he was actually trying to be ghostlike.

"Aye!" he answered. "I curse!" His eyes and teeth flashed in the dark of his face. He drifted aft toward the port dory-nest. He halted a dory-length away from his skipper. He wished to be near him, for some purpose, yet not too near to mar the hatred between them.

Captain Hardegon had done all a man in his circumstances could rightfully do. He fell back a pace.

Nora stepped forward. She could see the men standing there, looking up at her, waiting for word or action, waiting for something to break

the spell that had been cast upon them all, upon them and the *Golden Hind*. Knowing that custom required the captain of the *Hind* to speak that word or to take that action, she, too, gazed hesitantly down at him. When he withheld all sign and bore her scrutiny without wavering, she called out to the doryman. She matched her voice, in loudness and authority, to her position, which demanded such qualities.

She said, "It's you, John Corkery, who stands there and curses captain and vessel and owner!"

The man answered, "'Tis John Corkery, miss, and no other."

By a twist in his voice, the doryman put a second meaning into his words. This meaning chilled her again, yet gave her no sure understanding why it should be so. Yet she was alert. She knew he had given weight to that word John. Numbness crept upon her and, in that tick of time while she peered downward to the sighing *Hind*, the word rolled within her. "John! John!" In despair, she said the name over and over, broke it up, fed eagerly upon it. Yet the man's meaning fled from her.



SHE gave one tormented glance at Captain Hardegon. She made out his face. It was calm. He said nothing. Nevertheless, to her look, which was a beseechment in the

gloom, he gave a captain's answer. He nodded his head sternly to show that he knew she understood what she must do in the honorable course of things. "If you are fighting for the *Golden Hind* and for your life," he said by that nod, "you must fight now! You know what to do."

She lifted her voice and sent her words, even louder, down to the deck. "Then, John Corkery, take your gear off my vessel! Heaving-stick and gaff and pipe! All off, John, and stand ashore. Your brother will take your settlement for you. If any there be!"

A lashed bundle rose through the darkness, tossed by the man's hands. Before it ceased to roll at her feet, the man himself stood before her, enormous in the night. The eyes under the ledge of his skull pierced her. The gear in his right hand rattled. And now, in this fierce, silent, last exchange, the true meaning of his words struck her the harshest blow. She could scarcely keep the reeling in her heart from becoming a reeling of the body. Captain Hardegon's hand touched her arm.

She asked: "Where is James? Where is your brother, John?"

His bare left hand raised slowly and pointed beyond. Beyond Gloucester, beyond the Yankee Banks, beyond bleak Sable.

"He feeds the salt!"

The ancient idiom of Grand Banks death bowled its syllables out of that agonized mouth like balls of iron and they flew noisily about her head.

A man below gave a groan; and the *Golden Hind*, finding her place in tide and in the timbers yielding to the tide, groaned also.

The doryman bent over and picked up his bundle. He took one step away and, with his back turned, spoke gently to her over his shoulder. "I do not curse you, Cap'n Nora. No! Nor

Vaguely outlined against the glimmer of the upper street, he stood bowed over his gear. A moment later, he threw his bundle over his shoulder and, at slower, grieving pace, trudged out of sight.

Even then, the new burden of his words kept her stock-still, her bare head bent in reflection.



"See if you can be civil to the men of the *Golden Hind* if not to us," said Nora to Captain Hardegon.

the old man that's dead. Nor the poor *Hind*. I don't curse her. But him—him that goes skipper of her—Roades! Him I do curse. He is a murderer and may the curse of Christ rest on his four bones!"

A voice below murmured, "Ah, no! Ah, no, chum!"

Doryman Corkery walked away.

No one stirred or spoke while the bereaved man strode up the Doonan Wharf. Once he stopped and, again without turning toward Nora, seemed to consider some matter.

A briny rain blew against her crown of braids and glistened there. A briny taste within her made her mouth downcast, made it poor instead of rich. She understood that the return of the *Golden Hind* without a good stock of fish was an evil almost fatal to her hopes. Yet that might be withstood. Besides, it had been foreseen; and she had yet a venture at hand that might give the vessel one last chance to fill her pens and keep herself alive.

The death of a skilled doryman was another matter, and it was equally grave; for he could

hardly be replaced. There were no capable hands at ready call in Gloucester. The winter voyages to the Banks required more than skill. Such fishing required great hardihood and endless stores of courage and strength. Even more was needed on the *Golden Hind*, where sail must be handled, too. These skills, but not the strength, were to be found among the old men, who might be willing to go for her. Younger and stronger men must be found on the *Hind*, if ever she went to sea at all, would go short-handed, short a hard-working dory. All this was bad. Yet the loss was even more saddening because it cast a dishonorable shadow upon vessel and family and upon the man she loved.

Captain Roades did not say a word until he faced Nora in her office. When he did speak, he showed at once his confidence in his hold over her, in the intensity of her affection for him. Instead of describing at once the tragedy aboard the schooner, he said, "Have you any money, Nora?"

Before she could reply, he made up a smile so close to wheedling that Captain Hardegon stirred uneasily, then became alert. He had never been able to put away his distrust of the *Hind's* skipper. On the other hand, his strong desire for Nora's happiness, wherever it might lie, and his own wish to be fair to all men, compelled him to go slow. He was aware, too, that now he could never speak to her as freely as he once could. He knew that anything he might say could be laid to jealousy. He came out of his corner by the streaming window and turned up the wick of the brass lamp that swung from a beam. "A little light on the subject, Jack."

Roades repeated his question. "Have you, Nora? I don't need any for myself. It's for them." He nodded his handsome head toward the window. "For the men. A little for them to take home to their women. They've got to be back aboard tomorrow."

Nora kept her hand thrust into her coat pocket. Roades' question made her distress increase. She could almost discern an evil pattern in the events that troubled her and the schooner. Her fingers clung to a packet of banknotes in her pocket. She had made it all that very morning by selling a spare sail and a pair of the *Hind's* dories, three seasons old. Out of that money flowed the strength she needed. It would provide the *Golden Hind* with her new, last chance. It would buy coal for the galley stove, grub to cook on it, and fresh gear for parted trawls. That wasn't all! The whole venture in Nova Scotia depended on that money. It was the very life of the *Hind* that her man was asking for in so careless a manner. To herself, she grimly repeated her grandfather's saying, "If it isn't one thing—it's another!"

To Roades, she said, "How much, Jack dear?"

"Twenty-two men. Twenty dollars apiece, if you can spare it."

"Four hundred and forty dollars." She trembled when she did the sum and spoke it aloud, for it was precisely the sum that she had earned. It wouldn't have been so bad if he had asked for even more than she had. But to hit on the exact sum was unbearable, because it bewildered her, sharpened her queer notion that she was trapped and could never escape.



ROADES misunderstood her. He took her troubled expression as a sign that she was broke again. He said, "If you haven't got it, I can get it for you."

Captain Hardegon quickly asked, "Where?"

The *Hind's* skipper gave no answer to him. But he couldn't keep the churlish look out of the glance he gave to Hardegon, by which he meant, of course, to indicate that this was business between owner and captain. He made no reply until Nora herself repeated Hardegon's words. "Where, Jack?"

"Parran. Captain Parran will give it to us."

This mention of the *Doubloon's* skipper angered both Nora and Hardegon. Their faces flushed. They frowned together and exchanged a look which did not escape Captain Roades. He said at once, "The men have been out a month, you know."

Hardegon repeated what he had said earlier about Captain Parran. "I'd go to sea hungry before I took a dollar of that guy's money!"

This was a slur to Roades. He let out some of his anger. "Parran's a friend of mine."

"You've got better things to boast about." Hardegon passed the words over in not too tough a fashion; then he flung more after them. He said, "I hope."

Nora shut off the quarrel by a gesture of weariness. "I've heard enough of Parran lately to last me some time. I found—I've just learned that my grandfather took more money from him than I thought. We'll forget him." She then drew the money out of her pocket and slapped it down on her desk. "Four hundred and forty. There it is! Call them in."

Neither of the captains missed the trick. Four hundred and forty needed; four hundred and forty slapped down before them. Hardegon perceived that there had been a close call here—and an unexpected one. He started to say something, then thought better of it.

Roades looked at the money and said, "Four hundred and forty? Just four hundred and forty, Nora?"

"Just that, Jack. No more. No less."

He pulled away from the money and gave her the close, secret scrutiny that he often used to make up his mind. It was as plain as day that he wished to ask, "Where did you get it?" Something barred the question. Oddly enough, there came into his bearing a poorly hidden hint of disappointment. This didn't escape Nora. It naturally baffled her. Even in the midst of

her anxiety, she was proud of the work that had made this payment possible. She wanted to hear some word of praise from him. She didn't get it. In her bewilderment, she asked, "What's biting you now, Jack? It's honest money. It's schooner money."

He replied in a gentle voice, "'Tis nothing, Nora dear. I thought—that is, I don't get much of a chance to help you. And I want one. I want one."

Nora believed him. She took quick comfort in his good intention and shed a smile that was all warmth, all new contentment, as if things had suddenly taken a turn for the better.

Hardegan, on the contrary, lifted his upper lip and made his frown over into something close to snarl. Had he been free to speak, he would probably have said something really nasty. He contented himself with: "Your men are waiting outside in the rain. For a little cold charity."

"Call them in," said Nora, "and see if you can be civil to them. If not to us."

He opened the door and peered into the rain. He called out a name and said, "Come aboard chums. Settlement's on." Before the first doryman struck his boot on the outer step, Hardegan turned to Nora and said, "You hand it out to them and get rid of that pout of yours. Do you know what I mean?"

She understood the hint that there might be a rift between captain and crew, so great a bitterness that they might refuse money from his hands. "Hands," she thought, with a return of that earlier terror, "which have been cursed by John Corkery."

CHAPTER III

THE MARK-BUOY



THE dorymen came thronging in. One by one, two by two—a sight to behold and one not to be seen in any other shop in Gloucester. These were men of the old school, the school that had been bred to sail, had been taught to handle it long before Nora had blinked the light of day. They had been taught in Norway and Ireland, Portugal and the Labrador, in Newfoundland and in Nova Scotia, on all the islands of the Western Approaches. The whole Atlantic world, blue-eyed and bristly, dark-eyed and bearded, stood before her, crowding the ancient room, filling it to the beams with their shoulders, bowed a little and widened much by years upon the Banks. Even the least of them carried himself in such a way that you knew he could break the back of a gale. And each man showed his *Hind*-bred courtesy by taking off his cap and giving her the salute of rope-hardened, blackish fingers. Each one broke apart his lips to make a smile for her.

She gave them their ten-dollar bills and they jostled away. She closed the door, drew its curtain, and brought the blaze of the lamp down to a glow, so that she might be undisturbed in the business that now had to be done.

She stood square under the lamp to begin it and said to Captain Roades, "Tell me now, Jack dear. How did James Corkery meet his death? And why do they hold it against you?"

The captain of the *Hind* answered her in forthright fashion. He began, "John Corkery curses me before my men and before you and Dan. And he lays the blame on me for the death of his brother when he knows well enough that I'd never send a man anywhere I wouldn't go myself. Aloft or over. No! And that I never drowned a man in my life by putting dories over when they should be kept on deck. 'Tis a lie, Nora, that I should have this said of me!"

"Go on, Jack."

He ran headlong into his story, reeled it off with such vehemence, such desperate talk of sweeping searches from bank to bank, that both Nora and Captain Hardegan could not help but become aware of the passionate drive that he had thrust into vessel and men. Night and day, from the first hopeful hour when he had made a set on La Have, he had searched for fish.

He hadn't killed a cod, not a doryload, on that first set before the dogfish struck in by the thousands. They had swept against his trawls with a ferocity that he had never seen before. He picked up his dories and sailed eastward to the outer edge, hoping that there he would be free of them, the curse of the fisheries. Yet luck had run against him there, too. This time his gear had parted. The tide had been strong, as usual, but there had been no reason for not making a set. They baited up by torch-light and he sent the dories over before there was day to see by.

"The dories lay out until I gave the fishing signal," he said, "and it wasn't twenty minutes before I saw Number One dory—the Corkerys'—with an oar up and I knew they had got hung up on the bottom. So I sailed over and took them in tow, meaning to go down to the leeward buoy and let them haul from that end. Well, I'd no sooner dropped them off again than cook sings out that two more have parted gear and I sailed back, thinking this was hard luck and no mistake.

"I picked up Number Three—that's the Lisbon and his chum—and I looked down into it and saw no fish. But I saw something else and that was a box—a wooden case—lying on the bottom boards. Lard! And I knew then what had happened. I'd picked out the best bottom on the eastern edge and now there was a freighter or two breaking up there after the torpedoes. The trawls were hanging up on the wrecks and the cargoes. I could hear the other

dories yelling and blowing horns. So I picked them all up and got our gear and cleared out. I had to go, Nora. I couldn't have stayed, even if there was fish. And there wasn't any. You see, Nora?"

She nodded and then, in the sudden, irresistible upspring of her affection for him, she reached out and touched his trembling hand.

He halted his story abruptly and cried out, "Gear! Gear! That's the size of it all the time. Always wanting to save a bit of gear. Save a dollar to keep her going." And with that pitiful protest against the poverty that always pressed him and struck at his judgment, he told them how he had let the *Hind* fly eastward again under a whole mainsail until he had swept beyond Sable Island and was running along the southern edge of Banquereau in a hundred fathom of water, where he had killed fish before and now hoped to kill again.

"I brought up the bottom," he said, "there being some question among the older men as to exactly where we were on 'Quereau, but the gravel told the story good enough for me and I said, 'Bait up, boys, and let's try our luck.' So we baited up and made the set and they came aboard for dinner with the trawls in slack water. When I dropped them off again, I was sure we were all right, but before I had the last dory over, the wind suddenly hauled around to the northeast and I knew we were in for it. I didn't wait for the glass to fall a tenth. I just came around and picked them up as fast as I could.

"But by the time I got the Corkerys aboard, they had hauled a string or two and they were crazy mad to keep on fishing because there was some fish there, the finest cod I'd laid eyes on for years. The sea was kicking up and there was some snow blowing over. A squall now and then. Well, I was just as anxious as any man aboard to fill up a pen or two, but that was no time to let a dory go live by itself. So I made them come in.

"And that's the time both the Corkerys came to me and I listened to them. They said, 'We'll rig up a mark-buoy and we'll heave to by it and fish here in the morning when the blow's over.' That was a thing I shied at, but they kept talking and I rigged the buoy. I didn't have one aboard, of course, so I took a dory-mast and made an anchor fast to it and lashed a few old preservers halfway up and put a few batteries over the cork. I used a bulb from a flashlight. It wasn't the best buoy on the Banks, but I figured it would make do. And the men said so, too. We threw it over and heaved to for the night. Or whatever we had before us."

At the words "heaved to," Captain Roades' voice changed to a duller tone; and, by his glance from Nora to Hardegan, he seemed to be taking their measure, seemed to be seeking a sign that they had really sailed those hundreds of miles with him and had made sail and taken

it off, fought for his fish and rested to fight again. He grew weary before their eyes. The dullness in his voice was matched by a new dullness in his green and glowing eyes, as if he meant to show how nearly his own fires had been put out by the labor he had undergone.

"It was the mark-buoy," he murmured.



BY his desperate, half-seeing stare into the past, Roades made them peer with him across the heaving waters of 'Quereau, hour after hour, to watch that star-point of light drift and jerk violently over the wealth of fish below. And he told them how, in the beginning, the *Golden Hind* blew sluggishly toward the mark and bore off and came back again, ever striving to keep close to the signal that might yet make all the difference between failure and success, between full pens and pens swashing with unused ice. Twice the mark vanished altogether, overwhelmed by enormous seas or hidden by snow squalls that kept ramming in. The night turned pitch-black and the rain stiffened with sleet. During one of those anxious times when the mark-buoy had vanished, ice began to make on the *Hind* and her deck became too dangerous for a watch forward. The wind rose almost to gale force and it became a question whether the *Hind* could ride it out or should run before it.

"I had the helm, Nora. I went below only once. I went down for a kink. But I was too worried and couldn't sleep. So I said I'd come on deck again. When I rolled out of my bunk, I took a look at the glass and I found her working toward *Fair*. That did me good. I would have turned in again right then, but I thought I'd go up, just the same. By the time I got on deck, the wind had let up considerable and I went to the wheel to relieve Corkery. James, it was. It was him who took over from me. The watch was an hour."

Roades struck his hands together in a gesture of amazement. "Upon my word you could have knocked me over with a feather! I hardly looked at the man who had the wheel. It was still pretty dark, you know. Terrible dark, though there was some light showing where the moon was. I said something, I forget what. And it was the Lisbon who answered me! The Lisbon! I tell you, I jumped. 'What the hell!' I said. 'I leave a man at the helm and tell him to keep it until I come up and off he goes! Where is he? Where's Corkery?' And that damned Lisbon, he says quite easy, just as if the *Hind* was sailing on a duck pond, 'Why, he and John put their dory over and are rigging that mark-buoy. The light went out on us, just as we almost runs her down,' I yelled at him. 'Good God!' I said. 'You damned and double-damned Lisbon, you are on watch and you let a dory out of the nest without sending for me? An old man like you?' And he said to me, 'Tis



Roades

the last gear aboard for a mark-buoy, Captain, and we don't aim to lose it.'"

Captain Hardegon was astonished. He asked, "The Lisbon? He said that, Jack?"

"Yes!" Roades turned to Nora and stopped in front of her. He had been striding up and down, striking at his yellow thatch with that nervous hand of his. Now he beat his fists together, knuckle against knuckles, and stood before her, watching the changes in her face.

He said, "So the upshot was—"

Here, for the first time, he faltered, so that it seemed he had suddenly realized that she could keep him off that beautiful deck forever. Aye, and do other things to him!

She repeated, "The upshot—" and she let her voice rise on the word, making it a keen question.

"The upshot of it was that I found Number One dory bottom up and John Corkery clinging to the plug. His brother was dead. Under the dory, caught in a thwart. Drowned. The first man of mine that ever met his death that way, Nora! And he had the mark-buoy gear—the wire—in his hand."

"How did it happen? The drowning, I mean."

"'Twas nothing! He was grappling with the mast, meaning to secure the batteries, which had worked loose, when a sea knocked the mast out of his hand and dragged him over. I figure the wire looped over him. Over his arms." He laughed miserably. "James Corkery was the man who always said to me, 'No! I'll not learn to swim a stroke. 'Twill only take me that much longer to drown.'"

He walked away, passed out of the circle of light cast down by the lamp and stood outside, where Hardegon also stood and waited. Both of them waited for her verdict, quite as if she were a judge seated on a bench. Which, indeed, she was. While he waited, the captain of the *Hind* took a turn on his heel and, coming close to Hardegon, said in a low voice, "I lost the fish, anyway. When we hauled in the morning, there wasn't a thousand pounds on the hooks. Not a thousand."

Nora asked, "You buried him at sea?"

"His brother did."

She then gave her judgment. "You should never have left the deck, Jack, dear. If a man like you was tired, then your men were too tired to think properly."

He opened his mouth to protest, but she implored him, by a glance, not to speak. He flinched under her gaze because he was tormented by his desire to justify himself. This desire twisted him around toward Hardegon to whom he said eagerly, "Dan, can you imagine a man going off watch like that? Why, he had the helm!"

Hardegon hesitated over his reply at first. The behavior of the Lisbon, who was one of the greatest dorymen in the fleet, had mystified him. He shook his head in a confused way and then said, "There's an end to it, Jack. Think no more of it. You did your best. As for me, I don't care to use a mark-buoy. My father always said 'twas better to depend on the lead and the bottom. But there's an end to it. You lost a man. Now you've lost his brother. I don't know where you're going to get two good hands to take their dory. Unless"—he turned with a good laugh on his face—"unless you can get Nora to sign on. And take me."

This pleasantry was the required signal, made by a captain of much experience and wisdom, that the saddening talk must be ended, that life and work were to go on again. One more name had been added to the roll of ten thousand dorymen who had died upon the Banks since the beginning of the fisheries. He had been given his due; now the tune had to be changed.

Nora understood. She smiled and said, "I could do it, you know, if the worst comes to the worst."

Hardegon made fun of her with his eyes.

She went on. "Three summers ago, on the Grand Bank itself, I gaffed a halibut that opened somebody's eyes!"

"Me! Me!" Captain Roades rejoiced in this sudden grace of Grand Banks talk. He pushed Corkery's ghost away with a swing of his hand, threw back his big, blond head and laughed. "Three hundred pounds, Dan. Oh, Lord, what a beautiful day!"

"I know. I know." Hardegton took his measure of their reddened cheeks, and, having found something annoying to him there, he made an exploration. "Anyway, Jack, you'll have a passenger to Nova Scotia in the morning. If that's any comfort to you."

"You?"

"No. Nora."

She cried out, "Hey, chum! I'll make my own announcements."



THE expression on Roades' face, coming in quick change and quicker concealment, was certainly something to think about. One would have supposed that he'd have been glad, especially because he had been looking at her during the evening in an unmistakable manner. Besides, she was no greenhorn. Strangely enough, his genial grin became a frown. You'd think he had been told that his Aunt Matilda was going along to keep him stately company. All the pleasant green shimmer passed out of his eyes. They became dark and old.

Hardegton couldn't quite figure out what that meant. Yet it seemed to him that, for some reason, Roades didn't want a fresh and shrewd pair of eyes working on the *Golden Hind* at this time.

Nora said, "It's true, Jack. I'm going to sail with you to Shelburne—if the *Hind* gets away. If I can get her fitted out. I can't afford the time or money for a train-ride. Besides, it would be a bad waste."

Captain Roades asked, "Why are you going to Shelburne, Nora? In this weather—"

"I've business to do there. The *Hind's* business. Something I must keep to myself for the time being, Jack. I want to put it over on my own, dear." She gave him a pert shake of her head, too, and added, "And what do I care about a bit of weather, sir?"

Either in his weariness or for some other reason, Captain Roades then said a careless thing.

It may have been meant to discourage her because it was aimed at a natural degree of superstition that was part of her, as it is part of all sailing folk. He considered the state of things aboard the *Hind* and, after cocking a speculative eye toward the lamp, he said, "O. K.! Well, you can have Corkery's bunk. I'll have it fixed up for you. It's in the cabin, of course."

Even Hardegton, despite his lively concern in all that was going on, wasn't ready for this harsh turn of an innocent affair. His hands

jerked out of his pockets in a way that, under other circumstances, would have meant a slap in the face for somebody. He asked, "Which Corkery's bunk, Captain?"

Roades blandly ignored the fighting-cock pose and gave Hardegton the round eye. "Why—the one—the one that's gone, of course!" He kept his look of surprise and switched it swiftly to Nora's whitened cheeks. It had been her turn to flinch. Roades said, "John will be aboard—mark my words! Or he'll starve. And he bunks forward."

Nora then gave her answer. "It's all right, dear. I know you didn't think as we did." Again she reached out for his hand and touched it. "I don't mind using a dead man's bunk. After all, who hasn't?"

The affectionate looks that passed between them, then and before, were hints enough to Hardegton to be on his way. Just the same, he had a speech to make and he began it by saying to Roades, "Jack, I have the news from Nora about you and her. I wish for your happiness as I wished for hers."

Captain Roades gave his thanks in a pleased way, which showed clearly enough that he had expected Hardegton to take that news in a less graceful fashion. He held out his hand to Hardegton and said, "Dan, I'm obliged to you for your kindness. I really am."

Captain Hardegton took up his bundle and laid it before them on the desk. He began to untie the cord. "It's likely I won't be here to dance at the wedding. If I'm lucky enough to get a site on a dragger. So I'll give you your wedding present now. You'll get lots of prettier ones, but nothing better. Nothing better than mine." He pulled the cord free. "It's for you two. And for the old *Hind* also." He pushed the wrapping aside and waved his hand.

Nora and Roades took an eager step forward. In so doing, they put their hands together, so that they actually seemed like bride and groom at a table laden with their gifts.

It was Roades who spoke first. He frowned and said, "Well, I'll be damned!"

Nora had no words ready. She merely stared at the gift.

The gift was a net. That is, part of one, about ten feet square. It was beautifully woven of prime manila. The mesh was the largest they had ever seen.

Hardegton didn't look at Nora or Roades. He, too, kept his gaze on the net. He had made it. He was proud of it. He said warmly, "A five and three-quarter inch mesh. Five inches and more, I guess, when set a few times and shrunk. That's what the Danes and Scots are using to build up their haddock fishery again. It'll take no baby fish. Only the big—" He paused because he had looked up and seen their frowns. "What's the matter, chums?"

Roades asked in a rough tone, "You say this is for the *Hind*? You've the whole net done?"

"Yes. Sure, Jack! One hundred and twenty feet from mouth to cod-end. Eighty feet at the mouth. And I've got most of the manila for the other net." His thin lips curved into a happy smile.

Roades struck at the net with his hand. "No, you don't! Not while I'm skipper of the *Hind*!" Without waiting for Hardegton's reply, he added, "Or maybe you think the *Hind* needs another skipper?"

These words were hard for Hardegton to handle. For a moment, he stood in confusion; then he pressed his teeth down on his lip and said calmly, "Why, no, Jack! No! Some people might say a thing like that, but I know a good man when I see one and I know hard luck on the Banks when I hear tell about it. But you don't mean to stand there and tell me you want the *Hind* to go on as she has been? Jack, dories and hooks will be the death of her. The time's past when that gear could compete with the draggers.

"But I've told you that before and all you did was nod your head! Why are you so surprised now? The *Hind's* got to be made over into a dragger. We've got to put an engine into her. She must earn her way, same as the *Mary* and *Martha*. She grossed two hundred thousand dollars last season." He took a step forward and repeated, "The *Hind's* got to change over!"

"Who says so?"

"I do!"

Roades also stepped forward. "And who are you to talk of the *Hind*?"

This was an unfriendly question and Hardegton was in no mood to let it pass. The folds of manila slipped from his fingers. He said, "I'm a friend of the *Hind*. And of the Doonans."

"There's only one Doonan left."

"All right, then. A friend of Nora's."

"Friend or no friend—let me tell you something, Captain Hardegton. And it's this: you're not telling us what to do with our vessel." Roades again struck his fist down violently against the net. "She stays as she is. I'd have fifteen thousand dollars' worth of fish in her pens tonight if I'd had a break out there! Fifteen thousand!"

Hardegton replied, "And the trip before? When you couldn't get home in time with what little you had, because of no wind?" His lips changed into a scornful shape. "You and your topsails! Don't you know that the old man's dead? You have that news, haven't you? Is a dead hand going to steer the *Hind* forever?"

Roades had no answer. He could only say, "You heard me!"

Captain Hardegton made his appeal to Nora. He raised his right hand in a gesture of dismay. With his left, he lifted a rich fold of the net and held it slightly toward her, as if he wished her to pass judgment on his work, not him.



HAD he not been so confused, he might have read the answer in her stubborn eyes. But he waited for her words. Her face had darkened, even under its strong wind-tan, when Hardegton had spoken with such authority of his plans for her vessel. His reference to the dead hand had almost brought a cry from her lips. She hadn't been at all sure of herself when the talk began. Earlier in the evening, while she had waited anxiously for the *Hind* to come home, she had resolved that the change must be made some time, that she would break from the clogging tradition and get into step with the changing times. The truth of it was that she had desperately desired a good profit on the voyage for that very reason. With the vessel's share, and the money she hoped to make on the *Western Star's* great keel, she could pay for the conversion of the *Hind*. She could buy the engine, the winch, and the rest.

But Hardegton had struck a hard blow at her pride. She was the one to make such a decision! More than that, she couldn't help being swayed by Roades's attitude. It puzzled her, in a way. He had not always been so adamant. She could understand that a captain whose only skill lay in the handling of sail and in killing fish with hook-and-line might very well be loath to learn new ways. Yet, however stubborn and selfish his attitude might be, she could not resist doing what he wished; because she loved him, loved him more than she had ever loved the *Hind*. Before she spoke, she glanced at that weary, blond-bristled face shining under the lamplight. His eyes caught her glance and returned it with a fierce appeal that seemed to be a promise.

She said, "The *Hind* stays as she is. She sails tomorrow."

Captain Hardegton took up his gift and walked to the door. With his hand on the knob, he turned and looked at her intently. And, strangely enough, the unaltered friendliness, the unchanged devotion, in that gaze struck deep into her heart.

He said, "All right. Just the same, I'll make the other net. Soon as I make more money." The thought of money brought more words from him. He added, "I made four hundred for my share on the *Moon Hawk* trip. Do you want some of it, Nora? You could go to Nova Scotia by train, if you like. It would be a good thing."

She knew him so well that she understood, by the clearness of his statement, that he, too, had decided she had better not sail on the *Hind*. Nevertheless, she gave him the answer, "No, thank you, Dan."

Captain Hardegton spoke to Roades, "You want a hundred, Jack? I can spare it."

Roades muttered something and shook his head.

Hardegton opened the door and walked out.

(End of Part 1)

PETTICOAT TROUBLE

By
KEITH EDGAR

The downgrade keeps us rolling while Crazy hammers at the split-pins and makes the air thick with his purple language.



ILLUSTRATED BY J. CAMPBELL FABREN

WHEN I was a little gaffer, my favorite book was about King Arthur and his knights. The one I remember best was about an ogre who had a beautiful damsel imprisoned in his castle. And this here knight, he comes along and beats the living bejasus out of the ogre and rescues the damsel. It reminds me of myself.

Of course, I ain't no knight, being just a

brakeman on the railroad. But the guy who says dark-eyed Peggy McIntosh isn't lovelier than any of them damsels is a liar. And her old man is an ogre, all right.

No, I'm wrong.

Crazy McIntosh is worse than any three of the awfulest ogres that ever lived. He is positively the meanest, orneriest, worst-tempered, sarcastic, horse-faced old stringbean on ten

divisions. The fact that he is a crackerjack engineer is neither here nor there. He is so mean that an ogre just couldn't stand him.

He can't stand me, neither.

The funny part of it is, Peggy thinks the sun just rises and sets on the old buzzard. So I ain't got much chance of rescuing her from his clutches until either she gets her pretty eyes opened as to just how mean he is, or else the mule-minded old coot has a change of heart and approves of me as a son-in-law.

This ain't likely to happen.

He claims that his daughter will only marry a real railroader, and that a suit of overalls and a lantern don't necessarily make one—meaning me.

Now, I ain't so bad, really. If you listen to Crazy McIntosh, you might get the idea that I am the world's worst brakeman. 'Tain't so. It just seems that every time I make a trip with Peggy's old man something goes wrong which puts me in a bad light.

Take the time we had that eastbound hot-shot.

We are down in Windsor, waiting to haul a munitions train east on her way to a convoy at a certain Atlantic port. The other brakeman, being senior man, insists that I ride the engine all the way, although the usual system is for us to take turn-about on the head end. So, feeling kinda depressed, I get some fusees from the caboose locker and mosey up the yards to our engine. We got 2460, a big powerful freight hog with a fair turn of speed.

Crazy McIntosh, in clean overalls, a blue bandana tied around his scrawny neck, denim cap on backwards and goggles shoved up on his forehead, is poking among her drivers with a long-spouted oilcan. As usual, his gaunt cheek is bulging with McAndrews plug ("a strong chew for strong men").

He bends over and sticks his long nose down to examine a bearing, and I am sore tempted to give him just one kick. But, thinking of Peggy, I restrain myself and decide to be diplomatic.

"Good afternoon, Mr. McIntosh."



HE grunts, straightens up, eyes me in a disapproving manner, expectorates, shakes his head sorta disconsolate-like, and goes back to his bearings.

Oh, well. I swing up into the cab where Dirty Dolan is laying his fire. Dolan, two hundred and twenty pounds of stupidity, a living example of the saying, "strong back and weak mind," his bovine face intent upon his fire, don't even look up in answer to my friendly greeting.

I ain't hurt by his lack of cordiality, however, as he just don't know no better. Dirty Dolan is the only fireman on the division who can get along with Crazy McIntosh, because, besides

being awful dumb, he can also make steam better than most.

Our train rolls through the tunnel from Detroit.

Crazy climbs up into our cab and plunks his bottom down on the hogger's seat. I go down and swing onto the footplate of the tender. After the electric engine has cut off, we back down to the train and I couple on.

I am back up in the cab and Crazy is testing the air when Jelly-belly Bates, our conductor, puffs up with our orders and clearance.

"Now, listen, Mac!" he hollers. "We got eighty cars of munitions, and they want 'em in a hurry! Let's get going!"

Standing up in the gangway, I looks down at him and ruminates that some people just never learn. After all the years he's worked on this division he shoulda known that is the wrong thing to say to a guy like Crazy McIntosh.

Crazy, he is just clipping our orders to the file over the throttle when he hears these remarks. He slews around, expectorates out the cab window and grins down at Jelly-belly kinda sarcastic-like.

"Well, don't say, Mr. Bates? Yew don't say!"

He stands up, shifts his quid to the other cheek, swings the Johnson bar back into reverse, yanks the whistle cord three times and jerks on the throttle.

Old 2460 snorts in a surprised manner and heaves herself back against the train, piling a couple of car-lengths of slack into it before she stops. Crazy turns around, throws the Johnson bar forward, jerks the whistle cord twice, eases back on the throttle and gives her the sand.

The big hog slides gently forward, then her exhaust thunders deep and loud, *Whump! Whump! Whump! Whump!* Her drivers start to spin, grab on the sand, and she strains forward like a willing horse, picking up the load as Crazy McIntosh pours on the steam.

Once the whole train is moving, the hogger pulls the throttle back a few more notches and our exhaust sharpens to a hammering *Wham! Wham! Wham! Wham! Wham!* as we pick up speed rapidly. We are starting as fast as a passenger train, eighty cars and all.

I lean out the gangway and look back. Jelly-belly Bates, who has been waddling down the train towards the caboose, suddenly sees he ain't going to make it, and heaves himself up onto the ladder of a boxcar to continue his half-mile walk over the top.

Crazy sees it too. He leers happily at me, squirts his quid at a whistle post, pulls down his goggles and hooks the Johnson bar up a couple of notches, shortening the valve-stroke. He bites another chew off his ratty plug, rolls it into his left cheek, and settles down.

I got to admit that, with all his faults, Crazy

McIntosh can really drive an engine. If only he wasn't so darn hard to get along with.

By the time we highball through Tecumseh, the throttle arm is at the back of the quadrant, the Johnson bar is riding in the company notch, and 2460's exhaust is breathlessly panting, *Chung-a-chung-a-chung-a-chung-chung*, in fast staccato tempo, with the hiss of the compressed-air piston on the firebox door and the rhythmic clang of the coal scoop making an accompaniment as Dirty Dolan keeps her hot.

We cannonball through Belle River with our whistle shrieking like a banshee. The racing hog, her exhaust thudding fast and furious, is pitching and swaying and rocking and straining her iron heart to get us over the road, as Crazy McIntosh lives up to his nickname and pounds her tail with mad, reckless speed.

I sit up on my bouncing seat at the lefthand side of the firebox and think about how romantic it is to be working on the railroad. Here we are, hurtling over the roadbed with eighty cars of badly needed munitions, tanks and guns and shells and heaven knows what. Some four hundred miles ahead of us a convoy is waiting for these supplies, to rush them to the troops overseas. Every mile we put behind us, every minute we save, means that much less time our soldiers have to wait for their tools of war.

I look across at Crazy McIntosh, hunched over in his seat, one gauntleted hand gripping the throttle, head and shoulders leaning out the cab window, his jaws thoughtfully shifting his quid around in his leathery cheek as he peers through his goggles at the track ahead.

Me, I want to be an engineer, too.

It ain't as foolish as it sounds, because I have secretly been studying to be a fireman, and one of these here days I am going to ask Scotty Leyland, the division super, for a transfer. I can already fire an engine not too bad, but I ain't quite mastered the finer points of the technique yet. But, just you wait. Soon I'll be firing a hog, and the next step will be the right-hand seat for yours truly. Then it will be wedding bells for me and Peggy, because at last her old man will have to admit that I am a real railroader.

I'll show the old coot.



FOR some reason this seems to be a very peaceful trip. I just sit up on my seat and mind my own business, Crazy McIntosh sits up on his seat, whanging her tail for all she's got, and Dirty Dolan, dumb but efficient, steadily swings his scoop, holding the gauge dead on 210 pounds.

When we blast through Chatham, I pick up an order on the hoop which gives us a clear track the rest of the way in. This makes Crazy happy and he grins at me in a way that is almost—but not quite—human. After handing him the order, I cross the pitching, rocking,

jolting cab and climb back up on my seat. Let sleeping dogs lie, is my motto.

At Glencoe we pass a drag which has pulled into the siding to let us pass her. This puts the hogger in still better humor.

By the time we hit that long easy grade down into Middlemiss, I am getting tired of just sitting on my seat doing nothing. So when Dirty Dolan starts digging into the locker for his lunch-box, I climb down to fire her for a while and let him eat in peace.

Crazy looks around, sees me pick up the scoop, gives me a sardonic leer, and leans out the window again.

Well, we are pounding so hard that it is a little difficult for me to keep my feet on the jouncing footplate, and the first few swings I don't quite synchronize my throw with the treadle and toss the coal all over the cab, while Crazy brays like a jackass.

You see, the firebox door is operated by a compressed-air treadle, and you time your swing so that you press the treadle with your left foot just at a certain point, and the door opens at the exact moment your scoop hits it. This lets the minimum amount of cold air into the firebox and helps keep her hot. However, in a few minutes I've got the hang of it and am feeding the coal to her light but even.

Then it happens.

The engine suddenly seems to hesitate, and smoke and flames pour out around the firebox door, scaring the devil out of me. The steam gauge quickly drops from 210 pounds to about eighty.

Crazy McIntosh utters a scream of rage and anguish, slams the throttle shut and leaps down onto the floor of the cab. He snatches the scoop from my hands and I duck fast. But he don't take a swing at me, as I expect. He just uses the scoop to shade his eyes from the glare as he opens the firebox door and examines the fire.

Swearing something awful, he throws the scoop down, leaps across the cab to the toolbox, grabs a heavy hammer and dives out onto the catwalk to the front of the engine. I hear him hammering at something, and lean out the cab window. As far as I can make out, he is pounding back the dogs on the smokebox door. Sure enough, he comes hurrying back along the catwalk of the rocking engine, preceded by a blast of profanity, and bounds into the cab.

"Hey, Dolan!" he yelps. "The petticoat pipe is down! Bring the firerake and a sledge!" He grabs a cold chisel from the toolbox and goes back out to the pilot.

Now me, I've been studying *Grimshaw's Locomotive Catechism*, and I know what the trouble is. You see, an engine gets her forced draft from the exhaust, which is piped from the cylinders to a big jet in the smokebox, under the stack. To make sure that the draw from the boiler tubes is evenly distributed, a petticoat pipe is inserted between the jet and the

stack. This is a cast-iron pipe about a foot in diameter, in sections. Each section is flared at the bottom, hence the name, petticoat. Surrounding the jet and petticoat pipe is the spark screen, with a door in it which is fastened on by large splitpins.

Well, one of these sections of petticoat pipe has dropped over the jet, killing our draft. Now, thinks I, here is my chance to show the old buzzard that I know a thing or two. Dirty Dolan picks up the firerake, so I grab the sledgehammer and follow him out onto the catwalk, hanging on tight to the handrail. I would sure hate to fall onto our thrashing driverods.

When we get out to the pilot, Crazy McIntosh has the smokebox door swung open and is hammering at the splitpins holding the sparkscreen gate with his mechanic's hammer and cold chisel. Clouds of smoke are belching out of the tubes into his ugly face. We are still rolling along, not very fast, but the downgrade keeps us going with the steam shut off, which is a help.

Crazy's purple language and the smoke from the boiler tubes is making the air rather thick. He is getting the bottom pins out all right, but the higher ones are just a bit too far up for him to hit with his hammer while holding the chisel.

"Here, Dolan! Hold the goddam chisel!" he shrieks.

Dolan sets the firerake down crossways on the pilot plate and takes ahold of the chisel. Crazy McIntosh grips the edge of the smokebox and raises up on his toes to pound out the pin. He can't quite reach.

"Let me at them!" I hollers, and swings the sledge.

Well, just then we jolt over some switchpoints and the sledge misses the chisel slightly and bashes Dirty Dolan's hand. In spite of the fact that he is wearing leather gauntlets, it don't do him no good. He drops the chisel and grabs his hand.

Crazy lets go a scream of anguish, like it was him that was hurt, and hurls his hammer at me. Fortunately, I've learned to duck fast when he is around.

He snatches the sledge from me and hollers, "Goddamya, bub, I'd brain ya if it wouldn't leave me short of help! Now hold that chisel, goddamya, before I lose me temper!"

Me, I'd hate to see him lose his temper, so I gingerly stretch up and insert the cold chisel into the splitpin.



CRAZY McINTOSH swings the sledge and I squeeze my eyes shut. But he hits the chisel dead on and out comes the pin. I open my eyes and insert the chisel in the next one. Smoke and gases from the boiler tubes are pouring into my face, blinding and choking me. But I am made of stern stuff, and I shut

my eyes, hold my breath and grimly do my job, like any hero.

Finally, the last pin is out and I drop down onto the pilot plate to gasp for air, at the same time rubbing the black soot out of my eyes. Dirty Dolan has gone back to the cab.

Crazy gets the sparkscreen gate open and hollers, "Dammya! Quit dreamin' and hand me the rake!"

I hand the ornery old goat the firerake and he shoves it in, hooks the section of petticoat pipe and hauls it out, clearing the jet. Then he closes the sparkscreen gate, drives in one pin to hold it and slams the heavy smokebox door shut.

I watch him hammering home the dogs on the door. His face is coal black, and what with his goggles and ugly mug, he looks like something out of a horror movie.

He turns to me. "Say, bub! What the hell ya waiting for? Take that pipe back and throw it on top the watertank. You gotta fire the goddam hog!"

So I pick up the section of petticoat pipe and start back along the catwalk.

Now, not being a tightrope artist, I got to hang on with one hand to the rail. And not only is that cast-iron pipe heavy, it is also hot. I'm halfway back to the cab when we jolt over some more switchpoints. I grab the handrail a little tighter to keep from falling overboard and the pipe slips out of my gloved hands. It bounces once off the driveshaft and spins into the ditch.

Crazy, who is right behind me, screams like he is in mortal agony, and out of the corner of my eye, I see him half raise the sledge he is carrying. I forget about my fear of the narrow catwalk and jump ahead of him into the cab.

Dirty Dolan is sitting on his seat, a bewildered look on his dumb face, tying a dingy handkerchief on his swollen hand.

We are barely rolling along now, having reached the bottom of the grade. I grab the scoop and start heaving coal into the firebox, although I can't see a darn thing in there on account of the black smoke. Crazy McIntosh tosses the sledge into the toolbox, plunks his bottom down onto his seat, throws the Johnson bar forward and yanks open the throttle.

At this particular moment, I have just heaved some coal into the firebox, and my shovel is resting on the edge of the door. When he opens the throttle, the jets in the smokebox, being freed once more, blast out the excess smoke and gases and all at once I can see the fire again. I am so surprised, I forget to hang on tight to the shovel, and the sudden suction whips it out of my hand into the firebox.

Unfortunately, Crazy is watching me.

He roars like a mad bull, catapults out of his seat and grabs the grate bar. Me, I leap for my life up into the tender. I look back over my shoulder, expecting to see him pursuing me,

but he is prodding in the firebox after the scoop. He can't reach it.

Feeling somewhat relieved, I jump down again and hurry out the catwalk to the pilot. Picking up the long firerake, I lug it back to the cab. But it is too late. The fire, under forced draft again, has already consumed the wooden handle of the shovel. There is nothing left but the metal part, glowing red hot.

Crazy sighs, discouraged-like, expectorates, wipes his soot-black mouth with the back of his sleeve, crosses to the locker and takes out the spare scoop.

"Now, listen, bub!" he roars in a pleading tone. "This here is a important train. We got to get her in, see? Having half-murdered poor Dolan, yew got to fire her, see? Yew can't fire without no scoop, see?"

I nod understandingly.

"Well, then," he hollers, "if yew toss this here shovel into the firebox too, I'll strangle ya with me bare hands, see?"

Ignoring his nasty remarks, I take the scoop and go to work.

You might be inclined to think our troubles are now over, but they ain't. Because a piece of the petticoat pipe is missing, the draft is very uneven. Some sections of the fire don't burn as well as others. So I have to heave coal for a while, then go over the fire with the rake, then shovel, then rake, then shovel, then rake.

I get the pressure up again all right, but Crazy McIntosh, he is back to pounding her tail and I'm having a tough time. The sweat is soon running down my back and down my forehead into my eyes, and my arms are working like pistons, back and forth, back and forth, back and forth. Every time the needle drops a little, Crazy lets a screech out of him and I grab the rake and up she goes again.

I am wishing I had never started working on the railroad in the first place.

But we are pounding along at a good clip, and the cab is swaying and bouncing and rocking and pitching. My back feels like it is broken and I am getting so tired I can hardly keep my feet.



TIME holds no meaning for me any more. All that matters is the needle on the steam gauge. I try all the tricks I ever heard of. I keep only an inch of water in the glass, I try

to spread my fire light but even by constant raking, I toss my big chunks of coal into any holes that appear in the fire, and occasionally I take a second or two to wet the coal down with the hose. But mostly I just slug my heart out, cursing the day I decided to become a railroad man.

Crazy McIntosh, he just curses me.

Then, when I am finally ready to collapse, I hear our whistle whoop four times and the hogger eases the throttle forward. Incredulous, I

painfully straighten my back and stagger to the gangway. Sure enough, we are just rolling onto the trestle at the west end of the yards into St. Thomas. Our run is over.

As we trundle into the yards, I hang onto the handrail, gulping air into my aching lungs, and decide that if it is the last thing I ever do, I am going to bash Crazy McIntosh just once with the coal scoop. I turn back into the cab and pick up the shovel.

Crazy McIntosh, he shoves his goggles up onto his forehead, ejects his quid and grins.

"Bub," says he, "ya did a fine job. I didn't think ya could do it. Just fer that, me and Dolan won't say nothin' about how ya smashed his hand a-purpose."

Smash Dolan's hand on purpose? Why, the old buzzard! Just for that I'll wallop him twice.

"Yessir," grins Crazy, "mebbe some day yew'll make a real railroad man, at that."

H-m-mm. I set down the shovel. Maybe he isn't such a bad guy, after all.

I am back in the caboose, washing up, when a messenger comes along and tells me I'm wanted up in the super's office. I scrub my face a little cleaner and hurry over to the depot.

In the anteroom, I take a gander through the door into Scotty Leyland's private office. There is Crazy McIntosh, just as he came off the engine, goggles up on his forehead leaving ghastly white rings around his eyes, the rest of his ugly horse face being black with smoke and soot. He is looking lugubrious and wiping his hands on a chunk of cotton waste, while the white-haired super pounds him on the back of his dirty overalls and tells him what a fine fellow he is for bringing the crippled engine home. It sickens me to hear all this praise going to the old coot.

Then I see why I am sent for. He wants to congratulate me, too. No doubt, Crazy McIntosh has already told him about how heroically I did my part, and he is eager to shake my hand. Now is my chance to ask Scotty Leyland for that transfer to a firing job. I can almost hear those wedding bells ringing.

Crazy McIntosh pussyfoots out of the office, looking sheepish, and I go right in.

I cross the rug to stand in front of the super's desk, and say respectfully, "Did you wish to see me, Mr. Leyland?"

I am going to let him congratulate me first, then I'll pop the question.

He looks up at me and shakes his head kinda sorrowful. Then he leans across the desk and wags a long finger under my nose.

"Wise guy, huh?" he roars. "Think this railroad is made of money, huh? Think nothin' of throwin' away our petticoat pipes so's you don't have to carry them, huh? Lose yer temper and throw our coal scoops into the firebox, huh? Jest for that, you can take a week off without pay!"

I don't ask him for that transfer.

FLIGHT WITHOUT WINGS

By

SIDNEY HERSCHEL SMALL

Knocking the nearer of the astonished soldiers off balance, Davies wrested his bayonet from him and ran him through, while Holmes with sudden fury hurled himself, bound as he was, against the other.



IT WAS a hot, white noon, with the sun so directly overhead that there were no shadows in the licensed quarter of Tokyo. Number Nineteen, with its tiled roof and red-lacquered doorway, was as silent as the other guest houses. What few geisha were not at the baths beyond the walls at this hour were sleeping.

A single figure moved in the streets, a

wrinkled old vendor who hawked chipped ice which, when flavored with cinnamon oil and sugared red bean pulp, was believed an antidote for heat. Little puffs of dust rose as he walked along a thoroughfare no longer immaculate. In these days of war, none but men and women as old as he were available for sweeping; and the presence of many cigarette butts, orange peels, and shrimp heads proved

A "Koropok" Novelette



ILLUSTRATED
BY
HAMILTON GREENE



"The Amerika-jin," the major told the young officers, "are as soft as isu-karemu. They will melt away before your bullets."

that their brooms were not vigorously applied. The litter also proved that the Yoshiwara had been crowded on the previous night.

"Yukinohana!" the vendor cried hoarsely to closed doors and screens. "Ice with sugar! Kori-azuki! Very cool and cheap!"

As he looked down at the melting ice in its cotton-padded container, he swore under his breath. Then his head lifted at the sound of an opening door. It was at Number Nineteen, and he shuffled toward it.

Planes thrummed to the north, sweeping nearer. The vendor knew that they must be Japanese, because *Amerika-jin* pilots feared to fly over Japan, knowing what a miserable death awaited them when they fell to earth.

The planes in flight made the ice-vendor oblivious to noises behind him. There, at an intersection nearer the outer gate, a strutting major had appeared, followed by twenty or more men in close formation. Although the men were being marched in a column of fours, as if conscripts, they were junior officers, pilots in the Imperial Air Force. All were young except the major. He was fat and gray, but there was more spring to his walk.

The vendor was being rapidly overtaken. He had eyes only for the open door at Nineteen, which might mean trade. When near enough, he recognized the figure in the doorway as that of the Ainu *hakoya*, the pariah servant who had been engaged by Suriga, the manager, when no one else sufficiently able-bodied could be found to perform the arduous work at the guest house.

The *hakoya*, without having seemed interested in either vendor or advancing officers, knelt down. With interwoven willow twigs he began to scrub the entrance to Nineteen. He was a short, dark man. He was young, but his face was bearded, as all Ainu are bearded.

His police permit, issued when he had first arrived in Tokyo from a northern province, stated him to be Koropok. The permit allowed him, as a pariah, to repair footwear, labor in slaughter-houses, or bury the dead after executions. He had become a servant here through the sly influence of Suriga, who thereby not only obtained a strong and obedient person, accustomed to degrading work, but one who did not dare to complain when the small pay was not forthcoming.

Koropok the Ainu was actually Llewelyn Davies, a lieutenant in Army Air Forces—heavy-set, swarthy, and black-haired like his Welsh ancestors. His disguise had been successful not only because of his appearance, but because he had lived with his father, a doctor, among the Ainu. He had been in Japan since the attack on Manila, and had carried out his initial orders, which had been to direct American bombers to objectives in Tokyo. He would be tortured before he was executed if the Japanese penetrated his disguise. In the meantime, he was doing his best to cause the Nipponese all the trouble he could; and a guest house, where high officers were entertained, was a fine place to hear the sort of things which enabled him to make plans.

He scrubbed away with his twigs, dipping them into a bucket of water, when the ice-vendor stopped in front of him. The Japanese major, Davies also saw, was about to order his men to halt at Nineteen.



THIS was something new. Guests were never expected until late afternoon. Could it mean the Nips knew him, at last, for what he was? Were they here, in accordance with their damnable fool-'em-politely-before-

torturing-'em bushido code, to escort him off? It was entirely possible. The thought chilled Davies, in spite of the heat. He knew that what had happened to Americans, in prison camps, at Yawata, Zentsuji, Moji, about which Japanese officers in their cups boasted so happily, would be just practice for what would happen to him.

Davies managed a casual glance at the major. The officer who was in command was staring down at the "pariah." No doubt of it.

I'll bash in his head with the bucket the instant I'm sure, Lew decided. Maybe I can get a couple more of the bandy-legged apes.

But he had to be sure, so he continued with his scrubbing.

The vendor, throat dry, since he dared not lick at the ice and lose any of the miserable profit, croaked, "Ainu dog, go inside and inform the maids that I am here with fine flower-of-snow to sell them."

Davies looked up. He intended to play out his part as the *hakoya*, although the major's face was far too grim for a man who had come here to be entertained. He said, in his clipped Ainu dialect, "I dare not go inside until the cleaning has been done, lord," and then ducked, as if to escape a blow.

"What?" the vendor screamed. "You refuse?"

The man on the steps pleaded, "Honorable vendor, do not strike me. All of the maids," the pariah added, "are at the baths."

"Some must be in the house," insisted the vendor. Then, still unaware of the soldiers behind him, he shrilled, "How dare you refuse me? I have four sons in the Army! All dead except one! Matsuju was killed in the sky! Kuoka died in flames! Kadzune also died in the air—"

The major reached forward, cupped his hand furiously over the vendor's mouth, and then gave him such a kick that the old man went sprawling in the street. Tray, bottles, and ice crashed down. Cinnamon oil ran over the dust like blood.

"You lie," the major snarled. "Any sons such as an ignorant fool like you might have sired would not have sufficient intelligence to be pilots. I doubt if you have sons at all. Because of such words as you have unpatriotically uttered," the irate officer ended with ominous truth, "you could be shot."

Davies glanced around carefully. The danger that he might be under suspicion was not yet gone; the major might have become enraged because an American had heard a bit of how the fighting was going, and how Nip flyers were being shot down. Then what he saw on the faces of the lieutenants gave him a better understanding of the major's rage. Why, the yellow-bellies were afraid!

These babies know what'll happen to them in combat, thought Lew. I'll bet, his knowledge

of the Japanese told him, *that the major's been ordered to bring 'em to Nineteen to build up their morale.*

Nothing could be more typically Japanese, Davies knew. Someone high in the Imperial government had decided that the flyers needed a big celebration before being sent to fight. This would not only build up their fighting spirit, according to Japanese reasoning, but would show them the pleasures which awaited them when they returned as heroes. But the pilots and bombardiers here, Lew guessed, were remembering how few airmen ever came back to Japan. It would take a lot of fancy food and geisha and saki, or Scotch from Singapore, to make them forget what happened when Nip flyers met up with P40s, to say nothing of the ships which were whispered about in Nineteen.

The wrinkled old ice-vendor shrilled, "How dare you refuse me? I have four sons in the Army! All are dead except one!"



New ships. Fast as hell. Armed with cannon.

The major whirled on his column, staring grimly at the lieutenants. One of the flying officers was looking down at the cinnamon oil, which gleamed in the hot sun like a pool of blood.

"Lieutenant Ogawa!" the major said sharply. "A soldier of Japan sees only that which he desires to see! To me," said the veteran of actions against China, "that spot is neither oil of cinnamon nor something which might be blood—unless it be the blood of the enemy. That spot is a fortunate omen. It is the sun!"

Right in the dust, too, thought Lew, his grin covered by his beard and his bent head as he scrubbed away. Right where it belongs.

"Lieutenant Ogawa," ordered the major, "sing!"

Shoulders squared, the thin lieutenant had no need to ask what song the major meant. Without pause, but in none too steady voice, he began:

*Umi yuka ba mizuku kabane,
Yama yuka ba kusa-musa kabane.
O Kimino!
He ni koso shiname
Nodoka niwa shinaji!*

The major, unsatisfied with the nervous rendition, puffed himself up. "Let us all sing," he commanded, stiffening to attention even more than before, so that his belt creaked where it cut across his paunch.

Screens were slid open, and the heads of girls not at the baths appeared as the column obediently shrilled the words and monotonous minor tune of the patriotic song, with the fat major singing at the top of his lungs.

*Give my corpse to the water,
If on sea I strive;
Give my corpse to the mountain,
If on land I strive;
Oh, holy Emperor, for thee alone I live,
And never die in vain!*

As the din died away in the stifling air, it came to Davies with renewed force that some of these airmen didn't like the idea of dying. What all of them would have preferred, Lew decided coldly, was to bomb defenseless cities and villages, or slip up on one or two P40s when the odds were fifty-to-one in their favor. But those days were over. These babies were beginning to learn what they were up against, and they didn't care for it.

"Now," said Major Taksei, rubbing his hands together, "you are prepared to enjoy yourselves here. You are in a proper frame of mind. What is wrong with you, Lieutenant Ogawa," he went on, like a dog refusing to give up his bone, "is the time you spent in America, learning to be of assistance to Japan. I think," Taksei chuckled, as a sign to the lieutenants that he was about to say something very funny, "that while away from Japan you must have eaten too much *isu-karemu*. The cold juice of cow-

animals ate away some of the courageous iron in your belly. *Isu-karemu*! Oh, what a horrible thing to eat!"

And how I'd like a big gob of it, thought Lew, on a scorcher like today!

The old ice-vendor had come to his knees, but dared not move off lest he attract the attention of the major. All that remained intact of his outfit was the tray. Everything else was broken.



"THE *Amerika-jin*," announced Major Taksei, "are as soft as *isu-karemu*. Up in the sky, they will melt away before your bullets. Oh, you will be forced to chase them in their inferior planes, because they will not face you. They have no more courage than—than this Ainu dog."

To emphasize the comparison, he pushed the *hakoya* called Koropok expertly with his foot. Davies fell sidewise. The bucket of dirty water was spilled, to splatter on the major's highly polished boots.

Damn it, thought Lew, as the major belabored the shaggy head of the house-servant with small fists, *why did I do that? But did I mess him!*

He whimpered, "*Dan' sam' ni mosh'wake . . .* Oh, pardon and forgive, master! Oh, do not beat me! Please do not beat me!"

"It is like this," Taksei, breathless, said when he gave the pariah a final clout, "that the *Amerika-jin* beg for mercy. I say this because I know. I saw them being herded from Bataan. I have seen them where they are imprisoned." He stopped suddenly, as if a notion had come to him, and then smiled from ear to ear, making the little clucking sounds which showed that he was pleased with himself. "I myself have seen that magnificent sight of a broken enemy," announced Major Taksei, "and you shall see it also."

Davies guessed what the major had in mind. Taksei intended to show the lieutenants that they need not fear combat with such men as the prisoners. Japan had used identical reasoning ever since the days when American seamen, shipwrecked in sailing-ship days, were caged and displayed in order to prove to the people of Japan that foreigners were no more dangerous than animals.

Suriga, manager of Nineteen, had been peeking from the cover of a screen. Now that the major was obviously in good humor and laughing loudly, Suriga believed he could safely put in his appearance.

He was all bows as he stepped through the doorway. "*O agari nasai yo*," he invited servilely. "Please enter to avoid the heat."

"You have been slow in appearing to do us honor," the major grumbled, not bothering to return Suriga's bows. "You are also unpatriotic. You have permitted your maids to go to

the bath house to enjoy themselves, when they should have been here, ready to entertain our brave officers."

"I will order them to return at once," Suriga promised. Although he had seen exactly what had taken place, he continued, "If that fool of an ice-vendor had not fallen over his own clumsy feet, I should buy his wares-of-coolness for your enjoyment. Oh, how I regret his clumsiness! I—"

"Shaved ice," said the major, about to lead the way inside, "is no drink for fighting men. It is too similar to *isu-karemu*." He glared at Lieutenant Ogawa, who had lived in America. "I ask you," he demanded, "of what good is *isu-karemu*?"

Davies knew that the lieutenant was supposed to say, "It is vile and worthless, and not fit for the men of Japan." But there was a curious glitter in the young officer's black eyes, and for a moment Davies wondered if the pilot were about to rebel against this goading which caused him to lose face.

Then Ogawa said, "If I had a captive American pilot or bombardier, and it were terribly hot, and he were thirsty, I would let him see *isu-karemu*, of which all Americans are fond. Then I would throw it in the dust!"

"That is excellent," applauded Major Taksei. "Under such circumstances, I would not even object if you ate the *isu-karemu*, very slowly and as if with enjoyment, so the American would suffer more greatly. Oh, the things I saw when we captured them at Bataan! I have hopes for you, Lieutenant Ogawa!"

Ogawa bowed gratefully.

The major, glancing down at the ice-vendor, began clucking again, as he had when a previous notion had come to him. "Keep that old fool here until I want him," Taksei told Suriga. "You," he said to Ogawa, "may have your wish sooner than you suppose! Now, let us all go in and have some cold *biru*."

"Beer?" asked Suriga. "That is difficult to obtain—"

"And it had better be cold," snapped Taksei.

"We will have some bottles while you send for your maids."

Suriga nodded. Then he said, "Koropok! Go and put on a house jacket. When you have done this, come to me for orders."

"Koropok" looked up dumbly, and the manager repeated what he had said. Davies slowly placed the twig brush in the bucket. He stood up. As he shuffled, pariah-fashion, around toward the rear of the house, officer after officer took a kick at him. Major Taksei was glad to see that the lieutenants' morale was improving.

Lew, in the tiny hole where he spent his few sleeping hours, made no effort to hurry. By the time he reported to the principal waiting-room of Nineteen, a place of cool green mats with flowers in a bronze pot in the alcove and one *kakemono* above, the maids who had been sleeping were already serving the officers with Nunebeki beer. The major had already emptied several bottles, between which, to show his strength, he had swallowed cups of Scotch. His round face, in the heat, shone with perspiration, and the maid who knelt beside him kept wiping it off with a cotton towel. The top button of his tunic was unfastened.

Suriga, bent almost double at Taksei's left, beckoned to Davies, who shuffled across the mats. As Lew came to the manager's side, he heard the major say, "Yes, we will do something about this shortage of *biru*. I can help you." Taksei's voice lowered, but Davies heard, "Those little boats, you know! Perhaps the very little boat which brought you this excellent beer leaves again tonight for more—"

Then Taksei saw the servant Koropok.



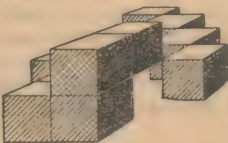
FACE flaming, the major shrieked, "What are you doing here, cow-face?" and put a hand on his holster.

"He has come for his instructions," soothed Suriga and gave them instantly before the major could take further action, because another servant as sturdy and stupid as this one could not easily be found.

BRAIN TEASER

THIRST PLEASER

How many cubes in this figure?



ANSWER.
There are ten cubes in the figure.



"Go to the bath house where you have been before," the manager said urgently. "Inform the honorable oldest-maid to bring everyone here."

"Watakushi . . . n' wa' wak'rim'senu," mumbled Davies. "Somebody will beat me. I am not sure what you order, lord I—"

"Where is this place?" demanded Taksei.

"Not far," promised Suriga. "The maids will soon be here—"

"Where is it?"

"Just beyond the street Kyomachi, honorable Major."

"Hmm." The major glared up at the pariah. "How many words can you read, Ainu?" he asked. "Come! Tell me!"

"Read, great lord?" whimpered Davies. "Words? Oh, please do not beat me again. I am not able to read words."

Taksei took out a notebook and pen. Whistling, he wrote on one of the pages. He grinned when he read over what he put down, tore out the sheet, and folded it several times. After sealing it with a *sen* postage stamp, occupation variety, he wrote on the outside also.

"Explain to the stupid animal," he said to Suriga, "that after he has summoned the maids, he must stop at Shoyuji Prison, and deliver this message to the commandant. It is near Kyomachi, as you know."

Taksei dropped the note to the floor. Suriga picked it up humbly, and then let it fall again. With the formalities observed, the manager said, "Koropok, go to the bath house. Speak with the oldest-maid. On your return, present this paper to the soldier at the gate of the place-of-prisoners. He will conduct you to the personage to whom the paper is directed. Go quickly."

Davies cowered away from the note. "I am afraid," he whined. "Beat me, but do not make me go! If I go to such a place, I will be forced to remain there!"

"You see?" Taksei shouted to the lieutenants. "Even a dog of an Ainu understands what it means to be inside one of our prison camps! That is way to scare the *Amerika-jin*, believe me! Why, all we had to do was behead a few of their bomber pilots, and they have been afraid to attack Tokyo again! Fear! That is the big weapon! And we know how to use it!" He began to sing a snatch of a Korean song.

*Whul whul na-n'un golgol sai-to!
Ta je-jak-i itkut man-n*

Then he shouted, "And we have taught them fear, I can tell you!"

Suriga repeated to Koropok what must be done, and he did it so kindly and so often that Davies guessed the manager hoped to profit from illicit beer brought into Tokyo from the outside. When Lew, head low, finally mumbled that he would do exactly as ordered, Lieutenant Ogawa, at the major's half-drunken command,

was teaching the others an American song. They would sing it again, together, the major shouted, when the war was won—just as he sang a Korean song as proof of the fact that he had assisted in conquering that once-arrogant country.

Davies backed out of the room. Since he used the rear doorway at all times, it seemed safe to stop at his hole, now that everyone was waiting on the guests. The outside of the note merely said that it was to be delivered by an Ainu to the commandant, by orders of Takao Taksei, major. The poorly gummed stamp was easy to slip off. The message was so informal that Davies knew the senior officers were friends. It requested that by four in the afternoon, when the day was hottest, American officers, pilots and bombardiers be in the Shoyuji Prison yard so that Taksei's charges would be able to look at them.

Taksei had written it this way: "*Tanoshimi ni omoishita ni . . .* I am looking forward with pleasure to seeing the American devils frying in the sun, thanks to you. However, my dear companion, I promise to provide a little unusual entertainment of my own. It is all for a patriotic purpose."

Davies' mouth was a hard, thin line under his black beard. American soldiers were to be tortured, in order to boost the morale of Japs! There was obviously nothing he could do about it; but it came to him, as he wasted a precious moment before starting, that people at home ought to know about it.

Could I get away and tell 'em? thought Lew. *Could I?* Everything which America meant to the gaunt lieutenant swirled up to blind him, to tighten his throat. How about the little boat—it must be some sort of power craft—which slipped into the bay with forbidden beer and luxuries?

There was no time to figure anything out. Davies paused long enough to get the bit of sharpened lead from his bearskin Ainu charm-bag and make an accurate copy of Taksei's signature on a scrap of newspaper, before leaving. Outside, he shuffled to the shaded pit where the tightly woven garbage baskets swarmed with shining green flies. He carried, as the excuse to come to the single place where he believed it safe to hide his scrap of paper with its signature, the crumpled wad of newspaper from which he had torn the piece.

Lew went through the formality of lifting a lid, to drop the newspaper inside, when, without previous sound or warning, he was shoved and tripped. A "Damn!" was jerked involuntarily from him. As he fell, a hand jammed his head down into the basket's filth and held it there.

Both of Davies' hands flashed into desperate action. His right, which was in the wide basket along with his head, managed to scrape fish-bones into the crumpled newspaper; his left,

on the ground, slid the folded scrap under the basket which only he filled and emptied.

After the one instinctive ejaculation, Davies became Koropok the pariah again, allowing whomever had slipped up on him to bang his head around at will and finally, to haul him to his feet.



IT was Ogawa, the lieutenant who had lived in the States. He was, Lew saw, about three-quarters drunk and four-quarters nasty. Worse, he was suspicious. His eyes glittered and his red tongue ran over his lips. "Do not deny what you said," Ogawa hissed.

What did I say? Davies wondered uneasily. As Koropok, he looked frightened out of his few wits. He didn't remember saying anything. So he said now, hoping Ogawa would give him some inkling of why he was suspicious, "Whatever I said, lord, was to honor all lords and masters—"

The Japanese flying officer was staring at him. The drunken face had become horribly shrewd.

Does he see behind the beard? thought Davies. He has lived in America. This isn't too funny. What's he going to do?

Ogawa snapped in English, "You said 'Damn!'"

No muscle of Davies' face moved. He merely stood as before. *It didn't work, did it?* he thought, watching Ogawa's discomfiture at failure of the trick. Davies' reply was ready; but, as Koropok, he waited for the Japanese to speak in a language which a pariah could understand.

It was a full half minute before Ogawa said, this time in Japanese, "Where did you learn such a word as you used? Tell me, or I will beat you!"

Davies said humbly, "Oh, lord, I said only 'Dam' or' ga i', to tell myself that whatever a lord does to me is his right."

He's thinking that's actually what he heard,

Lew was pretty certain, as Ogawa muttered to himself. *It is just about what a pariah would have said.* Then, to make doubly sure that the Nipponese' last remaining doubts would be dissolved in anger, to make Ogawa forget everything else, Davies said, "Please, lord, I must hurry away. I must obey the orders of my master and your master."

"Suriga is your master," Ogawa howled, "but I have no master except the Emperor. A major is a higher officer. How dare you say such a thing?"

Davies did not reply.

"Wipe your face," commanded Ogawa. "Use your jacket! Clean off your beard! Get the garbage-filth off your cheeks!"

As Lew did as he was told, he mumbled, "Oh, lord, I would have cleaned myself before taking the paper to the lord at the *Amerika-jin* prison—"

"That is not what I meant," grated Ogawa. He waited until Davies' face and beard were less nauseating. Then he grabbed the beard with one hand, yanking at it, while with his other he slapped the American again and again.

The Japanese was working himself up into a fanatical rage. He snarled, "When I shoot down an American pilot, this is what I will do to him! I will degrade him! I will pull out every hair on his head one by one, and then behead him!" He gave Davies one last furious slap, and then doubled his fist. Lew waited until the drunken, infuriated Japanese swung. He dared not counter, although the slanting chin was a beautiful target. He ducked instead, and Ogawa sprawled over the garbage basket. It overturned and Lew had all he could do to refrain from picking it up and slamming it down on the head of the Japanese.

His own head was whirling. He could, he knew, go inside and report to Suriga how the

A "Damn!" was jerked involuntarily from Davies as a hand suddenly jammed his head into the basket's filth.





There in the glaring, burning sunlight, Davies saw the American flying officers who had been taken prisoner. One of them with red hair caught his eye—could that be Rusty Holmes?

lieutenant had assaulted him; Ogawa would be punished, but so would Koropok. It would serve no purpose. Davies' orders were to do only such things as would make trouble for Japan. *But I won't forget you*, Lew promised.

He could taste sweat on his lips, and the taste of decaying fish from the basket. It was a long way from being ice cream.

The front street shimmered and blazed in sunlight. Davies could hear the nasal singing inside Nineteen, and the shouts of the men. Their visit to Shoyuji Prison, at four, would precede a wild evening at Nineteen when they returned.

Near the entrance to the licensed quarter were soldiers and sailors, examining the girls in the showrooms barred with wooden lattices. When a man selected a girl, she would hand him her long bamboo pipe and, smoking it, he would follow her inside. Saki stands were open here, and stalls where crushed fish and taro sent up their unpleasant odor in the heat.

Davies received the usual number of pushes and kicks, and again and again wiped spittle from his jacket. He was passed through the gate and hurried toward the proper bath house. A dozen wild ideas passed through his head as he thought of the Americans in the prison camp, but not one of these schemes was worth the damn which had come so close to breaking his disguise. What could a single man do? Why, even if all of the fellows at Shoyuji could get away, they would be tracked down within an hour. If only people at home could know what the Japanese were doing to prisoners. . . .

The facts should be told by a soldier who had experienced what Japanese bushido was like. A prisoner ought to tell about it, a prisoner who had been held in Tokyo. How could

such a person get away? Davies didn't know.

He himself, a familiar and despised figure, might manage to escape, but that was different. He knew his way around. He could get to the smuggler's boat and, after taking care of the man or men aboard, do his own navigating. And, in some way or other, he might put Taksei's signature to use.

Lew let the notion carry him away as he walked nearer Kyomachi, allowing himself to think what it would be like to be home. Home! His own people. Friends. Cigarettes. Dinner. Ice cream. Talk. He wouldn't play around long; just long enough to get the hang of the new ships.

I'd like to fly one of those babies the Nips call the forked-tailed devils, he told himself. *I'd like to be over Tokyo in one.*

He swallowed hard, gave a twitch to his bearskin belt, and approached the bath house. His orders were to remain in Japan, damaging the Japanese in every possible way, right here where the conceited sons were positive not one American lived outside of a prison. Orders were orders. But even so, when a man had been here since Manila's fall, he couldn't help but think of home.

II



HE reached the bath house, and shuffled inside. The cashier, knowing him and his errand, waved him on to deliver his message.

As "Koropok" walked along a steamy corridor, girls in loose bath gowns passed him, having already bathed; other girls, carrying towels and stark naked, waited a turn at the tub. Hoping that Nineteen's maids would



be finished and dawdling in the dressing room, Davies continued past where bathing was in progress, past where dumpy bodies were being polished with rice-bran bags, to the cooler room where many maids and women sipped cherry-flower water and giggled as they listened to Honorable Oldest-Maid's stories.

Koropok, delivering the order from Suriga, broke in on the *neisan's* account of a girl and man who had performed *shinju*, the suicide for love. He shook his head at the demand that he carry the maids' cloth bags back to Nineteen. When the *neisan*, angered at the refusal, said that she would have the bath house manager compel an Ainu dog of a pariah to do as she said, Davies was forced to tell her that Suriga had entrusted him with a message which must be delivered immediately to the place where foreign soldiers were imprisoned.

In Davies' ears, as he left, was the venom of the women. "If I had my way," a maid called Yoshi-ko from Nineteen said, "there would be no *Amerika-jin* prisoners. Let all be beheaded, as were the barbarians who dared to bomb Tokyo! I myself," the girl cried, "would delight in plunging a knife into the heart of an *Amerika-jin*. I would consider it to be my duty!"

It was hotter than ever outside. Davies guessed the time as being between one and two

as he shuffled along Kyomachi; and as he walked, he began to plan. Whether or not he could get an American out of Shoyuji Prison probably depended on too many things to be workable, but he intended to check carefully on each one of them. First of all, it depended upon his ability to forge Taksei's signature and write a message in the exact manner of the major. Secondly, it depended on the attitude of the commandant. Thirdly, Davies had to determine the exact location of the beer-smugglers' boat. And, lastly, he had to *know* a prisoner, or two, or three. They must be men who could handle a power boat's engine, and one of them had to know navigation.

Would the commandant send a whole squad to guard a couple of prisoners? Davies wondered. He didn't think so. The Nips figured that one Japanese was superior to a dozen unarmed Americans. *But my orders, Lew remembered, are that under no circumstances am I to risk detection except for a major accomplishment.*

Then, as he saw the ten-foot plank boards of Shoyuji Prison, he grinned in his beard. Perhaps this also might be possible.

Two infantrymen were on guard at the prison gate. The spectacle of an Ainu, a pariah, approaching them was more than enough to bring their rifles pointing at Davies. He held

out the message; and while one guard went behind him, pricking his jacket with the bayonet, the other guard snatched the paper. He read swiftly, then tooted on his whistle. The corporal who strutted out grabbed the message away from the private just as the latter had taken it from Davies.

The corporal drew his revolver. He walked behind Davies. "Go in the direction I indicate," he said, and prodded Lew through the gate. "Walk slowly," the corporal warned. "One fast step and I blow you apart."

Davies obeyed.

For some twenty feet there was a plank board fence on either side of the four-foot-wide runway. At the end was another guard post, manned by six soldiers and a machine gun. As Lew passed through it, the sun seemed more violent after the shade of the runway. On either side now was a five-foot barbed-wire fence, obviously electrified as the Japanese had learned to do to protect themselves in Formosa from the natives who so hated them, and with such good cause. Behind the wires were low wooden barracks; between barracks and fences were open spaces, prison yards, on which the summer sun beat down fiercely.

The yard to Davies' right was completely empty. He guessed instantly that it was for privates and noncoms, and that they were earning their two and a half cents a day by laboring on the docks, in the shipyards, at ironworks—whether they wanted to work or not. Davies knew only too well, from the things he had overheard at Nineteen, what happened to men who became too exhausted to continue.

In the other yard, to the left, in the glaring, burning sunlight, were prisoners in ragged dungarees—officers, bearded, thin to emaciation and doing nothing. Just sitting—sitting in the sun, the blazing white sun, and brushing flies from their hands and faces and bandages.

Flies hung like silvery-green gauze in the stifling air. Davies could hear the buzzing, like a high and distant flight of planes; and where the flies were thickest, shimmering like silk, was the infirmary.

Davies' eyes were no longer those of a terrified pariah. They were unnaturally bright, fever-bright. In his head was, *Damn them, damn them, damn them!* and it was not the flies which he cursed.

A prisoner with red hair, face concealed beneath a red stubble, caught Davies' eye. He dared not stare; but wasn't it Holmes? Rusty Holmes? While Lew, walking almost too slowly to satisfy the corporal, tried to identify the bomber-navigator who had been in Manila, another prisoner stood up, thrashed with flailing arms at the biting torment of the flies, and then ran toward the scant border of early afternoon shade at the barracks' edge.

A Japanese bayonet sent him staggering back into the sun.



LEW'S teeth bit deeply into his lip, but he walked shufflingly ahead like the pariah he impersonated. He could see the red-haired prisoner's hands double to fists. *I mustn't let him be shot*, Davies thought swiftly. *It's Rusty, all right.*

A quick glance told Lew that all the guards' eyes were on the man with the flaming hair. The corporal, behind Davies, must also be watching Holmes.

"Eyes in the boat, Rusty," called Lew. "Hold everything. It's Davies."

The corporal's gun didn't explode. Guards peered this way and that in the blinding sun, trying to see who had cried out. Rusty Holmes' hands remained clenched. A shiver ran through him, but he didn't turn his head.

A guard, unable to tell who had raised his voice above the permitted whisper, began to beat one of the prisoners.

"Damn them," Davies' lips formed. "Damn them to hell."

Inside the commandant's office a fan buzzed. A captain of Major Taksei's age sat at a desk, listening to his aide read the infirmary report. When he saw Davies, he said, "He looks almost like officers of the Royal Welsh—" as, with a plump hand he accepted the message from the saluting corporal.

A broad grin spread over his face as he read. He chuckled to his aide, "Major Taksei! Oh, what a clever joker he is! I can tell you stories about him, when we were in Korea. . . . And now, with a single stroke, he will use Americans to kill Americans! How subtle! With one arrangement he will degrade prisoners and instill new courage in our pilots! I would do anything," the captain ended, "to comply with a request from my old friend and superior."

While the captain brushed the characters in reply to Taksei's note, Davies listened to the fan. It buzzed like the flies.

"We must be ready for the major by four," the captain said to his aide, folding the sheet and handing it to the corporal. "There are prisoners in the infirmary," snarled the captain, "who are being too kindly treated. Have them in the yard. If the *Amerika-jin* prisoner doctor protests, inform him that I am considering removing him from the hospital entirely. That will silence him."

He shot a fat finger at Davies.

"If you delay by one small moment in returning to the honorable major," roared the captain, "I will fry the last ounce of fat off of you here in the sun. Do you hear? And when you are dead I will flay you, and make boots out of your hide. You will wish that you were an *Amerika-jin!*"

It was not necessary for Davies to simulate trembling. He was shaking, though with deep anger, not with fear.

They've got to know at home, thought Lew.

Suddenly, chillingly, as Davies straightened up, he saw that the girl's eyes had opened. She was staring at him open-mouthed. She had seen him with the ink-pot and brush!



Even if they won't believe such things are possible, they've got to be told.

He could think of nothing else all the way back to Nineteen.

A hundred duties awaited him, from the moment he delivered the captain's reply. Every girl, kitchen-maid as well as returned geisha, was engaged in entertaining the lieutenants. "Koropok! Hot water! Koropok! You are slower than an American bomber coming back to Tokyo! Koropok! Koropok!"

The matting in a room was ruined by spilled tea. Koropok replaced it. The charcoal on which to broil bits of fish was consumed. Koropok ran for more. A pilot howled for ice, and Koropok was sent to find a vendor. The lieutenant desired to place ice around a bottle of beer, as he understood the Americans did, so that he could practice what he would do when

Washington was captured. Major Taksei shouted for this and for that, but kept an eye on his watch. He was here on duty.

Davies began to doubt whether some of the lieutenants would be able to walk to Shoyuji Prison, and *rikisha*, in these times, were difficult to obtain. Ogawa, in particular, seemed so drunk and sleepy that his maid—who was Yoshi-ko, the pudgy girl who wanted American blood, had pillowed his head in her lap.

A dozen times Koropok was sent to Suriga's office. He knew, on his fifth visit, where the power boat which smuggled luxuries to the capitol was docked. Suriga was a careful manager. He wrote everything down, leaving nothing to chance.

Bit by bit, Davies did his planning. He believed it would work, and it would be a real pleasure for him to do it. One thing remained

to be solved: how, if prisoners escaped from Shoyuji Prison, could he remain undetected as the person who had engineered it?

He remembered his orders. He believed that information about the treatment of American prisoners in Japan warranted his own detection, arrest and execution—and he was not able to think of any way to prevent this from happening.

"Koropok! Where are you? Oh, how the stupid animal stinks! Wash yourself, Koropok! How you sweat! Koropok! Koropok!"

Then it was twenty minutes to four, and Major Taksei gathered his lieutenants. Some needed support, even after their faces were repeatedly washed, and they were strongly dosed with green tea in which chickweed had been infused.

Ogawa, however, was so weakened by the eating of frozen cow's milk, Major Taksei said, that the pilot would never awaken until morning. Taksei intended to recommend that Ogawa be ordered into the infantry, and would have suggested a more severe punishment for his not being able to go with the others save for the fact that it was Ogawa who had spoken of offering *tsu-karemu* to the Americans in the broiling sun, and then throwing the filthy stuff into the dust of the prison yard.

Of course they had none of this *tsu-karemu*, but Ogawa, before saki had made him forget his duties, had told how shaved ice could be pressed together and colored pink or brown so that it would look like the horrible American food. Koropok's final task had been to bring every ice-vendor in the neighborhood to Number Nineteen.

And then it was a quarter to four, and the house became silent. Ogawa slept in his room, head on Yoshi-ko's lap. She herself, having taken cup for cup with Ogawa, slept also, her back against a screen. Suriga counted the profits in his office, with his *hakoya*, Koropok the Ainu, crouched at his feet. Major Taksei had paid for the night for Ogawa, since it would be an ill thing for the hundreds of soldiers in the district, staring into the show-windows, to see an officer in the lieutenant's condition. Taksei had no objection to an officer becoming drunk. Certainly not. But it could not be allowed to interfere with duty.

It was breathlessly hot and still in the tiny cubicle. Suriga pattered slowly at his accounts. So many whiskey-sodas, so many bottles of saki. Taxes—oh, a large total! So many girls. In a way, the manager envied Koropok, the Ainu dog, who had no worries, who thought of nothing.

Four o'clock, thought Lew. *They'll be paraded. They'll keep up their chins, too. Even the sick.* He swallowed the ache in his throat, but it was still there. There was no way in which he could keep out of mind what was taking place.

III



THE yellow sun beat down on Shoyuji Prison, on the fierce yellow men, and on the yellow dust of the prison yard where the prisoners were dying. There were no buzzards overhead—only flies, waiting.

Do they know at home? wondered Davies.

He had the means of escaping, himself. He was positive he could manage it. He also believed that there was a good chance of getting two or three men out of Shoyuji. Why not escape with them?

Someone in Nineteen laughed shrilly at Oldest-Maid's account of the actions of the lieutenant she had entertained. It was high, shrill laughter . . . and Japanese, at this very moment, were laughing at the gaunt prisoners. Both of Davies' hands were so tightly clenched as he envisioned what was taking place at Shoyuji that his nails cut into his palms.

Then he forced himself to relax as he awaited whatever orders Suriga might give. His job was here. It was here, doubly, because of what he had seen, because of what he knew was taking place now. The Japanese had to be pulverized into dust, until they were no more than the yellow dust into which they were grinding down prisoners, hungry and sick alike. Only they couldn't grind down such men, Davies knew. It wouldn't work. Those were *men* in Shoyuji.

Not until six o'clock did Suriga finally give his *hakoya* permission to eat and then rest, although Koropok must be alert to answer any demands made on him. Davies gobbled down his plate of rice and fish, and then went out to scrape a bit of fishbone into the garbage basket. He dropped his plate clumsily. When he stood up with it in his hand, he also had the scrap of paper with Taksei's signature, which he palmed in the hand which carried the plate back to his sleeping-place. Only such care in little things had kept him undetected. Care in little things—and he had to be most careful when everything seemed to be going well.

In his tiny room, he used a sheet of notebook paper filched from Suriga's office and similar to Major Taksei's notebook paper, on which to write a message of his own. The paper might be traced to Suriga, but this would not be damaging to Davies. The message he brushed on the sheet was, like the major's, addressed to the commandant of Shoyuji. Lew was proud of the signature at the end.

He now reviewed his plan, step by step. He would go to the prison and deliver the note. It must look to the captain as if his friend, the major, had written the letter; it must look, later, to Major Taksei as if the message had been composed by Lieutenant Ogawa. Davies felt that he had done both things.

"Dear friend and comrade," the message said,

"lend me three prisoners, including the red-haired American I observed."

Major Taksei would have seen the red-headed Holmes, Davies knew. Not only was Rusty's bright head instantly discernible, but it made him the butt of crude Japanese jokes. The captain would understand why Taksei wanted to devil Holmes. On the other side of the picture, Rusty would be on his toes.

"I have a lieutenant," the forged letter continued, "who desires to prove his courage. What he does will be an excellent thing for the others to witness. It will also be amusing to me. Therefore please order the prisoners, together with whatever small and unobtrusive guard you feel is needful, to follow the pariah who delivered my earlier note." Davies had ended, faithfully adhering to Taksei's bombastic and boastful manner of writing, "It is my opinion that when the story of what happens is learned, your name and mine will be in every mouth."

That last, thought Lew, will make the captain smell promotion.

He had one more thing to do, and now was the time for it, as the hot summer evening darkened from purple to black, with no lights anywhere, because of the fear—in spite of all the boasting—of the *Amerika-jin* bombers.

Quietly, Koropok shuffled down the long corridor to the room where Ogawa and the girl Yoshi-ko were sleeping. Under his tattered jacket, Davies carried the ink-pot and brush which he had used. He entered the room without a sound, saw the sleeping pair, the saki bottles and bowls, the food stand, the chopsticks, porcelain spoons, knife, bowls. He was about to hide the writing implements under winter quilts in a cupboard, where investigation later would easily disclose them, when an additional way of proving Ogawa's guilt occurred to him. He dipped the brush in ink, kneeled beside Ogawa and made a tiny ink-spot on the Japanese' thumb.

Davies had the story he would tell later all ready: The honorable lieutenant had sent for him. The honorable lieutenant had given him a message, which he, Koropok, had delivered.

He knew nothing else. As to what happened after he delivered the message, everyone would know that.

As the American straightened up, he suddenly saw that the girl's eyes had opened and were staring at him. The ink-pot was in Davies' left hand and the brush in his right; and because the maid had seen them, her mouth popped open in the fraction of time necessary to put both objects down.

Davies' hand stopped a scream, turned it into a muffled outcry. In doing so, he knocked against Ogawa. The lieutenant groaned, blinked, swallowed—and was awake. Even his buzzing head must have told him that something was wrong. Japanese-fashion, he looked for a weapon, and found it in the food-knife of thin steel. He had it just as Davies was aware of his movement; he stabbed just as the American turned, still with a hand clamped on Yoshi-ko's mouth.

Ogawa's blow at Koropok's back missed, and the Japanese was carried forward on his knees. He would have fallen from the force of the blow if Yoshi-ko's neck had not been in the way of the blade. Davies' hand, on the girl's mouth, became hot with blood; instinctively he shot out his other hand to tighten on Ogawa's throat. His fingers were iron now, and into them went all of the restrained anger because of the things he knew. When he relaxed them, Ogawa was dead.

So was the girl.

Davies did not curse himself for having done the last little thing in order to prove Ogawa's guilt to investigating Japanese authorities. Instead, desperately, he began to figure out what must be done. He heard Oldest-Maid singing.

*Agemaki ya,
Tonton!
Hiro bakari ya,
Tonton!*

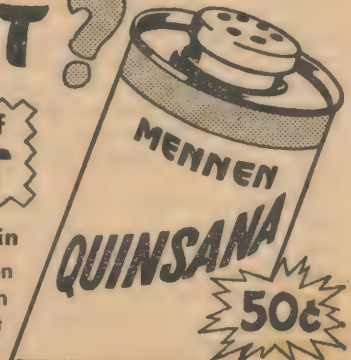
Her song for despairing lovers coincided with what Davies decided to do with the bodies of the girl and man.

HAVE YOU GOT IT?

Check Yourself for Symptoms of
ATHLETE'S FOOT

☐ Cracks, peeling between toes ☐ Itching ☐ Soggy skin

New scientific 2-way treatment with QUINSANA powder—on feet and in shoes—is producing amazing results. In tests on thousands of persons, practically all cases of Athlete's Foot cleared up quickly with Quinsana—used today by millions.





THE bloody knife, with the evidence of Ogawa's fingers on the haft, he left undisturbed. He placed Ogawa and Yoshi-ko's bodies chest to chest, on the matting, and bound them tightly together with the girl's sash. Next, he looped a cotton towel about Ogawa's neck, and slipped chopsticks through the cloth.

By using towel and chopsticks as a tourniquet, the Japanese could have killed himself. The pressure of Davies' fingers would be additional evidence.

Davies twirled the cloth gently, careful not to tighten it about the dead neck, lest the fact show up at post-mortem. This must look like suicide. Like *shinju*, the death-for-love. It must be thought that Ogawa, having lived in America and therefore performing an unusual *shinju*, had bound the willing girl to him, and stabbed her as he tightened the tourniquet.

Everyone would know that Ogawa had been very drunk.

There was blood and ink on the matting. Davies wiped off ink-pot and brush-handle, but did not bother to hide them. He emptied every saki bottle.

Lew knew how the authorities would reason out what had happened. Ogawa, they would decide, originally had good intentions, intending to kill the *Amerika-jin*, particularly the powerful red-haired devil, to prove his courage to his companions and Major Taksei. Forgery was bad, but was excusable when patriotic. It was unfortunate that Lieutenant Ogawa, whose belly was accustomed to weakening *isukaremu*, and not to saki, had not been able to make himself a hero.

Davies took a last look around. Here were all of the evidences of much drinking; and he himself, when questioned, would admit that the lieutenant's words to him, Koropok, had indeed been difficult to understand, but that he dared not disregard an order from an officer who served the great Emperor.

Do that right, Lew told himself as he left the room, and *you'll save yourself a beating*. What he had most to fear, he knew, was that the Japanese would cut him down during their first insane moment of wild fury.

The only person he met in the corridor was a thirteen-year-old *oshaku*, a dancing maid, who reached up and jerked at his beard as he passed. Intentionally, Lew dropped the message, making sure that the beady-eyed girl would say that Koropok, after having come from Yoshi-ko's room, had been carrying a letter.

Outside, the district was stiflingly hot, dark and perfumed. The canal Sanya-bori, at the end of which should be the smugglers' boat, gleamed like black jade as it wound through the licensed quarter. To the south and east, toward Kyomachi and Shoyuji Prison, there was evening heat haze, dark and thick. Some-

where over the inner bay the haze would become summer fog. It was always so.

He walked slowly, his head far in advance of his feet, and ducked away from the blows of marines and soldiers standing near the show-rooms; he ascended the stone steps beyond the quarter, where lanterns no longer illuminated the face of the old shrine there, and the door to the interior altar was opened and closed hastily by worshipers, lest the light of the hundred candles flaming there before the paunched god attract American bombers.

From the slight elevation, Davies marked the course of the canal, clear down to the stretch of mud at the end where only boats of light draught could be berthed. The canal Sanya-bori, previous to war, when the dredgers were not needed elsewhere to keep channels free for war shipping, had been far busier than now. Barges and sampans had crowded it then; now only small *choki* were tied to the muddy bank. The spot where the power craft should be was partially covered with haze.

Once the prisoners were on the boat, Davies felt sure that it could slide down the bay—sticking near the shore to take advantage of the fog and also in order to miss the anti-sub net—and to sea. Should a patrol see it, the patrol officer would have already accepted many a bribe, because in no other way could such a craft operate. The patrol officer would be counting the cut he would get when the boat returned laden. Such Army and Navy graft went clear up topside, Lew knew from the stories he had heard at Nineteen. Fortunes had been made, here and in the occupied countries.

As he neared the prison, it came to him that plenty of Nips were going to be unhappy, should he be successful. As he walked, and as he remembered what had happened in the hot prison yard, his hands clenched.

He was not surprised that the party of lieutenants and Taksei had not returned to Nineteen after the sadistic performance in the prison. The major and lieutenants were undoubtedly gorging themselves in a restaurant. That was good Japanese custom. What he did fear was that the captain, the prison commandant, might have gone with them, and this worry rode on his shoulders all the way to the gate of Shoyuji. But Davies had to act now, this night, or not at all.

It was a needless worry. The same procedure as before was gone through with: Koropok the pariah was again prodded through the gate and along the tunnel, and to Captain Mikimura's office. The sergeant on duty sent a soldier to the captain's quarters with the note. In almost no time at all Mikimura appeared, all smiles. He gave orders for his junior officer to be found and brought here. When the lieutenant came from his rounds, Mikimura was rubbing his hands.

"*Umaku itteru ze*," he said. "What a lovely



Once the prisoners were on the boat, Davies felt sure they could clear the anti-sub net and escape to sea under cover of fog.

thing Major Taksei has decided! What a pleasure it is to assist him! Read this letter, and consider the requests as my orders. How generous of Major Taksei to include me in the story!"

The junior officer giggled as he read. "The large red-haired one," he said. "Oh, it will be a pleasure to get rid of him. He is a trouble-maker. I only wish I might see what Major Taksei has in store for him! As for the other two prisoners—"

"Let us liquidate a pair of strong ones," said Mikimura. "The sort who refuse to be starved to death and who curse us. Sergeant! The records!" The captain grabbed the record book of punishments and pawed through it. "Number 24,429," he said, "is a man whom no punishment has civilized. Also Number 447. He has been long here, but thin as he is, he continues to live. Send him also."

When the sergeant went to get the three prisoners, Mikimura purred at Koropok, "Where do you take them, Ainu?"

Davies ducked as if expecting a blow. "Oh, great lord," he said, "I know nothing. I came from Nineteen. I return to Nineteen. That is all I know."

"That is what I thought," said Mikimura. "Oh, what a night they will have . . . including the prisoners! I wish I could go and witness it!"

So do I, thought Davies. *Nothing would suit me better.*



THE three Americans were brought to the commandant's office. The faces of all three were gaunt, and their bodies emaciated; but they gave Mikimura stare for stare until the captain snarled, "You are to leave the prison."

The red-haired prisoner, Holmes, had given no sign that he now knew the black-bearded pariah to be Davies. He said, "We are to be exchanged?"

Mikimura was about to scream at him, until the humor of the situation occurred to the Japanese. "Exchanged!" he said. "Well! Of course! Congratulations!"

Davies stood with bowed head while the junior officer gave a corporal instructions. The corporal and two soldiers were sufficient guard. The corporal was to take the prisoners to a certain place which the pariah would indicate, was to receive a receipt for them and then return. That was all.

Holmes knows something's up, thought Lew, as the hands of the prisoners were being tied behind them, ropes cutting into flesh, but the other two believe that this is their finish. He didn't know the other prisoners.

"Kat 'ku ti-tsuketa zo! Carry out orders," Mikimura snapped. "Go!"

As the little party went out, shouted farewells came from the barracks. There was the sound of blows, too, but these only made the yells the more cheerful and encouraging.

Shuffling on ahead, Davies was leading the way along the city's lower section, where the water-ways and canals had to be crossed by innumerable bridges, and where it was silent, deserted and dark.

The corporal demanded, "Why do you go on these alleys, Ainu dog?"

Koropok had the answer. "I only follow the great officer's orders," he whined. No soldier would dispute him in that.

When he neared the mouth of Sanya-bori Canal, inky-black and heavy with haze, the time had come. And so Koropok the Ainu paused and turned. He dared not speak a readying word in English for Rusty's ears and for the other two; it was too likely that the soldiers surely had heard English at the prison. But because Holmes was watching him, the brief nod of Davies' head ought to warn Rusty that this was it. He saw Holmes' elbows nudge the Americans on either side, indicating that Rusty was warning them also.

The two soldiers' rifles, bayonets fixed, were on their shoulders. The corporal had a hand on his holstered revolver. The soldiers were to the prisoners' left and right, and slightly to the rear; the corporal was beside Davies.

Ainu-fashion, Koropok grunted, and started to face forward again, as if about to walk ahead. As he turned slowly, his fist crashed against the noncom's slanting jaw with the exploding fury of two years' restraint.

Knocking the nearer of the astonished soldiers off balance, he wrested his bayonet from him and ran him through. Before Davies could bring the gun to bear on the other, Holmes had hurled himself, bound as he was, on the Japanese, to knock him to the ground, his rifle firing harmlessly into the air. Then Davies killed him with his mate's bayonet. The corporal died last, without knowing how.

"Listen," said Lew, as he slashed off the ropes. "Walk with me as I tell you. Grab the guns. That's it. Somebody'll have heard the shot, but will think it's just some fancy air-defense. The Nips do it all the time. If they pot a few civilians, it's O.K. with the military. If . . . This's the first time I've . . . You fellows . . . It's been two years . . ."

"Shut up," Davies whispered. There was the power boat. A cabin job. Locked. No Nip would take a chance at being caught in the boat if a disgruntled official felt he hadn't been given a big enough cut. "That's it," he said. "Break the lock. Take a course along the north shore. Close as you dare. There'll be maps in the cabin. It's got gas. Japs are great on being ready. It has a mast, too. The course is up to you, Rusty. There must be sails for that mast. Be sure," said Lew, because it was paramount in his mind, "to tell people at home what it's like to be a prisoner of the Japanese!"

"You're coming with us," all three protested.

Davies shook his head. "No can do," he said. Home! He cut through arguments with a swift explanation of the things which they must do until they were out of the bay, ending with, "You'll make it. But don't be taken alive." Then he grinned. "There's one thing you can do for me."

"Anything!"

"I've got to stay alive. I have orders, so it's official. Here's what you must do. Crack me over the head. A real clout with the revolver-butt. There must be a wound. Then, while two of you ready the boat, the other fellow must drag me back and dump me with the dead Nips. If anyone's already there, which is improbable, put me as near the spot as possible. It's got to look to the police as if I were left for dead. I'll be O. K. if you do this. If you don't," Davies said, "the Nips will slice me apart inch by inch. No story would work."

"But . . . Lew . . ."

Davies turned away, so that he faced Tokyo. The stink of the canal was in his nostrils. Dark Tokyo. Fearful Tokyo.

Holmes' big, thin hand was on Davies' shoulder. It pressed down hard.

"You know best," Lew heard Rusty say huskily. "Be seeing you."

Pain crackled in Davies' head. There seemed a great whirling, blazing red sun before him, and then everything darkened, to become a blue sky spattered with many stars. Davies did not know that he was smiling as the stars vanished, as everything became black as the night, and Rusty picked him up.





ILLUSTRATED
BY
GEORGE WERT

OIL FIELD LIAR

The Tall Tales Gib Morgan Told

Collected by MODY C. BOATRIGHT

THE old driller from West Virginia hadn't said anything, but you could tell from the way his chin went up and down as he worked on his cud of tobacco that he was thinking a thing or two. When I finished telling about how Paul Bunyan hitched his blue ox Babe to a dry hole and pulled it up and sawed it into sections and sold them for post-holes, the old driller sputtered a moment, sprayed the derrick floor with "ambeer," and denounced me as a weak and book-reading ignoramus and Paul Bunyan as just a plain lumberjack who was all muscle and no brains, who had never been near an oil well, and who wouldn't have known a bull wheel from a walking beam if he had. He profanely alleged that there had been only one great driller and that was Gib Morgan, who had learned him his trade 'way back in '87. He went on to tell how Gib had drilled for essence of peppermint in the Fiji Islands, how he had invented rubber boots in India, and how he had put up the big hotel in Beaumont. Gib might not be in history books, but he was the greatest oil man that ever lived.

I listened, assuming that Gib Morgan was the synthetic hero of the oil drillers, a man with no more real existence than Paul Bunyan of the lumberjacks or Pecos Bill of the cowboys. In time, however, I came to agree with the old driller as to both the importance and the reality of Morgan. Gib was a real person and a great man, as mythical as Paul Bunyan and as real as Davy Crockett. Long before Paul Bunyan's name ever was in print, tales of Gib Morgan were known in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Oklahoma, Texas—wherever oil was produced in the United States—and in Mexico, Venezuela, Iraq—wherever American oil men sent their crews.

He was known as the "Minstrel of the Oil Fields," and in many ways he resembled the minstrels of old; but he differed from them in one important respect. They sang the glory of the kings and princes who retained them. Gib Morgan was retained by various oil magnates, but he flattered no master. The deeds he celebrated were his own.—M. C. B.

I

GIB ON A TEXAS RANCH



GIB drilled the first oil well on the plains of West Texas, but he didn't discover a field. The well was a duster, but Gib always maintained that if the brass hats had

They sent him down there to make a test and he proposed to make it a real one. But after he had drilled eight years, they made him abandon the hole. They said that if he did bring in a well it would be in China, and they didn't have any leases there. Some English syndicate would get the production.

So they told Gib to plug up the hole and hurry on back and get ready to go to South America.

let him go on down he would have found oil.



Now Gib had heard the cattle baron who owned the land talk about buying some of this new barbed wire and fencing off a little calf pasture of a couple of million acres, but his cowboys wouldn't dig the postholes because they couldn't figure out any way to do it on horseback. So Gib just pulled up the well, which was a lot easier than plugging it anyway, and they sawed it into eighteen-inch sections and used it for postholes.

The cattle baron was so grateful to Gib that he wouldn't take any money for board, although Gib had been living with him for eight years. Gib insisted on paying him, but he said no, he was always glad to have good company at his ranch, and besides Gib had saved him thousands of dollars on post holes. Gib asked him if there wasn't something he could do to sort of help out around the place, and the rancher said well if it would make him feel any better he might go out and nail up some barbed wire. So the next morning Gib took a hatchet and a boot leg full of staples and started out. It was a pretty day and the work was interesting, and before Gib realized it the sun was about to set. He started walking along the fence toward the ranch house. The pasture was so big that it took him two days to get back.

II

GIB'S BIGGEST RIG



ANOTHER time Gib was in Texas, he had better luck. It was fitting, he thought, though only a coincidence that the biggest oil rig ever built should be built in the biggest

state in the union.

It all came about like this.

There was a certain region down in Texas where the Standard rock hounds figured that there was oil under the ground, but they hadn't been able to get to it. They had sent their crack drilling crews and production men down, but the formation above the oil sand was so cavy that they hadn't been able to make a hole. They would start with a twenty-four-inch bit and case with a twenty-two-inch casing. They would make a few more feet of hole and would have to set a twenty-inch casing. They would cut a little more and then they would have to case again. And it would go on like that until the casing became too small for the tools to go through, and after all that expense they would have to abandon the hole.

Finally John D. himself called Gib in and showed him the logs of all the wells they had tried to make, and said, "Gib, do you think you can make me a hole down to the oil sand?"

Gib looked at the logs a while and then he said, "John D., if you'll put up the money, I'll put down the hole."

"It's a deal," said John D., and they shook hands on it, but they didn't drink, both being temperance men.

First Gib went over to Pittsburgh to see the Oil Well Supply Company and told them how to make some special tools he wanted, some big tools and some little tools.

Then he went to Texas and started putting up the rig.

The derrick covered an acre of land, and since Gib expected to be there for some time he fixed it up nice. He weatherboarded it on the outside and plastered it on the inside. It was so high that he had it hinged in two places so that he could fold it back to let the moon go by. It took a tool dresser fourteen days to climb to the top to grease the crown pulleys. That is the reason Gib had to hire thirty tool dressers. At any time there would be fourteen going up, fourteen coming down, one on the top and one on the ground. A day's climbing apart he built bunk houses for the men to sleep in. These bunk houses had hot and cold showers and all other modern conveniences.

By the time the derrick was up, the tools began to arrive from Pittsburgh. The biggest string of tools reached to within ten feet of the crown block. The drill stem was twelve feet in diameter. It had been made in sections the length of a flat car. The spudding bit was twenty-five feet in diameter. At the first indication of caving Gib cased the well with thousand-barrel oil tanks riveted together. This reduced the hole to twenty feet. He put on an eighteen-foot bit and made about fifty feet of hole before he had to case again. Down about five hundred feet he had to go to a smaller drill stem—one six feet in diameter.

At a thousand feet Gib was using standard tools.



At two thousand feet he was using his special small tools and casing with one-inch tubing. But he hadn't figured it out quite fine enough, for he still hadn't got to the oil sand when the smallest drill he had wouldn't go through the tubing. But that didn't stump Gib. He brought the well in with a needle and thread.

III

GIB'S GREATEST FISHING JOB



IN all his years of drilling Gib never had a law suit. But he came mighty near it one time. He was working for a company in Ohio. It wasn't a very big proposition, and as it turned out he was glad that it wasn't. Most of the acreage was leased before his company got in there, and all they could get was a hundred and sixty acre farm, a wedge-shaped piece of land in Washington County, at least two miles from production.

At the depth of a thousand feet Gib struck a vein of granite that would take the edge off a bit in no time at all. He spent more time pulling tools and dressing bits than he did in drilling. Even then he couldn't keep a flare on the bit. It would stick in the hole; he would jar it loose and dress it, and it would stick again. This went on from twelve to four o'clock in the afternoon, when the tools lodged so tight he couldn't budge them an inch. He knew that he was in for a fishing job that was a real fishing job.

He ran a knife down on the sand line and cut the cable a few feet above the rope socket. Then he rigged up the longest string of fishing tools ever let down in an oil well. On the bottom was a rope spear to catch the cable end. Above that was a sinker, and above that a pair of long-stroke fishing jars, then a sinker and

another pair of jars. He put on so many sinkers and jars that he couldn't keep count of them and had to send for a bookkeeper. Then came the drill stem and rope socket.

Gib lowered the string into the well and right away he caught the tools. Then began the job of jarring them loose. He worked all the rest of the afternoon, but when dark came he couldn't tell that he'd moved them an inch.

At ten o'clock that night they were still tight as ever. At midnight they were still stuck, but Gib and his toolie were glad to see twelve o'clock come so they could go home and sleep and let the other tour do the fishing for a while. But the other tour didn't come. At twelve thirty they still hadn't showed up. The tool dresser wanted to quit and go to bed, but Gib told him they'd better work on a while longer. He'd see that the other men made it up to them some time.

They worked until two o'clock and still no relief came. Gib told the toolie to watch her a while and he would walk back to the boarding house and see what was the matter. Gib hadn't gone far when he found himself on the edge of a precipice. It was pretty dark that night and he was lucky that he didn't walk right off it.

Down below he saw a lantern and heard hammering and sawing.

"What are you doing down there?" he yelled.

"Hello, Gib!" someone shouted back. "We're building a ladder. We're trying to get up to the well."

Gib had jarred the whole lease up seventy-five feet. The graveyard tour had come out at twelve as they were supposed to, and had found the precipice and had begun work on the ladder right away. But as Gib kept jarring the lease higher, they had had to go back several times for more lumber, and even then the lease was gaining on them.





IV

A SIMPLE SOLUTION



GIB shut down and they finished the ladder. It was daylight and they were still wondering what to do when the farmer who owned the land came out and said he was going to have the law on Gib for ruining his farm.

He had gathered a big load of corn the day before and was ready to take it to market and his wife was going with him, and they had got up before daylight to get an early start, and there they were stuck up seventy-five feet in the air and there was no way to get down, and the farm was never going to be worth anything again.

Gib knew that the lease had a clause in it about damage to crops and premises, and he was afraid that the company was in for a law suit.

However, he gave the man a drink out of a jug he kept around the rig for emergencies and told him to give him a little time and he thought he could fix it up.

So Gib began thinking and studying and before long he hit upon a solution so simple that he wondered why he hadn't thought of it sooner.

He sent off to a big medicine house and got forty barrels of arnica salve, hoisted them up to the rig on the sand line, and packed the salve into the well. In an hour and a half the lease had fallen two feet. By the end of the second day the swelling was completely gone and the rock was so softened that the tools came out with no more trouble than bealing out a splinter.

GIB AS MANUFACTURER



ALTHOUGH Gib Morgan's chief mission in life was to drill oil wells, he did from time to time engage in other activities, sometimes from choice and sometimes from necessity.

sity.

Back in '73 it was necessity. That was the year when the first big shutdown came. The producers in the oil region of Pennsylvania shut down all their old wells and stopped drilling new ones in an effort to make John D. pay them more for their crude. Gib, like all the other drillers in the field, found himself without a job. That was a panic year too, and jobs in other places were as scarce as they were in the oil region.

Gib didn't like the idea of sitting around doing nothing, so he began thinking and studying, and after a little he hit upon an idea by which he thought he could turn an honest penny and create employment too. He went up the Clarion River and for less than a song he bought the timber rights on some old cut-over land upon which there wasn't a thing but stumps.

Then he traveled through the oil country and hired a gang of unemployed tool dressers and put them to work making shoe pegs. They would saw the stumps into cross sections the length of the pegs, split them into the proper sizes, and sharpen one end.

They worked all winter and when spring came they had made so many pegs that Gib had to charter two big barges to take them to market. He floated them to Pittsburgh, and then down the Ohio and Mississippi to St. Louis, where the big shoe factories were



located. But when he got to St. Louis, the shoemakers had all gone on strike, and he couldn't sell so much as one bushel of pegs.

It looked as though Gib was going to lose all his investment, which was all the capital he had. He studied a while, and then he had an idea. He got his men together and had them sharpen the other ends of the pegs. Then he took them to a big grain dealer and sold them for oats.

He certainly didn't get rich, but he made enough to tide him over until drilling started again.

VI

GIB'S CONTRIBUTION TO GEOLOGY



DURING the early years of the oil industry there was a lot of discussion about the nature of oil deposits. One school of learned men said they were reservoirs; another school of equally learned men held that they were veins. All of which shows that nobody else knows as much about oil as the practical oil man. For Gib Morgan demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt that all the learned men were wrong. Oil deposits are running streams, something like creeks and rivers, but not quite like them either, for the water in a river can never run up hill. They are more like big pipe lines that can dip up and down and the oil will dip up and down too, going as high as its source. If you find oil more often in anticlines than synclines, the reason is very simple: it's just that the oil is closer to the surface there.

Gib made this discovery quite by accident. It began back in the seventies when he was

working in the Bradford field. He had just drilled into the oil sand and was measuring the depth of the well. That was before Van Ostand invented his automatic measuring device. Gib worked it by tying strings on the sand line. He had the bailer on the bottom of the well and was bent over tying a string at the top of the casing, when his watch slipped out of his pocket and fell into the well.

It was a good watch—gold case and twenty-one jeweled works—and he hated to lose it. He tried for a couple of hours to bail it out, but he didn't have any luck. He couldn't get it out, and he wanted to drill about twenty feet into the oil sand, and so there was nothing to do but go ahead and drill it to pieces. When he bailed out he examined the cuttings carefully, but he didn't find so much as the hairspring. Where that watch went was a mystery to him for a long time.

Fourteen years later he was drilling in West Virginia. One time when he emptied the sand bucket, he saw something shining in the slush pit. He fished it out and there was the watch he had dropped in the well at Bradford. There couldn't be any kind of doubt. Gib would have known that watch anywhere.

But what was more remarkable it was still running. And when he compared it with the watch in his pocket, they were exactly together.

That watch hadn't lost a second in all those fourteen years in the bowels of the earth.

No, it hadn't run down. It was a stem winder and as the current of oil had carried it along, the stem had scraped on the bottom and sides of the passage and this had kept it wound up.

Gib still had the watch among his things at home and would show it to anybody who wanted to see it.

(Additional "tall tales" concerning the fabulous exploits of Gib Morgan will appear in these pages from time to time. In this month's CAMP-FIRE on page 8 you will find a sketch—strictly factual—of Morgan's career.—K.S.W.)



A JOB FOR JOE

By MURRAY MORGAN

ILLUSTRATED BY
V. E. PYLES



FOR the sickening, century-long second, Joe fought back the urge to clutch the air. Then the wind smacked his stiff body and he spun in quick, violent turns, down into blackness. The chute opened.

The heavy shock of the harness jolted the breath from his lungs and he swung gently in the calm air, gasping but happy. The red screen which flared inside his eyelids dissolved, the roar in his ears faded into the distant drone of the plane, and from the blackness below, trees sprang up.

Tugging on the guide lines, Joe crimped the chute to the right. But the forest unfolded be-

neath him like a runaway carpet; the faint breeze could not carry him clear. He hugged his face in his arms as he plunged through the treetops, cascaded off the branches in a series of short, frightening plunges, then jerked to a halt as the blue night chute umbrellaed over the top of a pine. He sucked in a deep breath of relief. The scent of resin from the broken branches was sweet.

Pulling himself up on the lift webs, Joe swung back and forth until he scissored a tree. He shinned up a few feet, hooked an arm over a branch and struggled out of the harness. A few tugs on the line proved the chute could



"Inainte!" the corporal ordered, jabbing his bayonet in the direction Joe was to go. "And I hope you try to escape!"

not be torn from the tree top without hours of labor.

As he climbed down, Joe gritted his teeth in disgust. This landing was a bad start. He had to leave too many calling cards. And he was lost. The jump had been scheduled for the wheat valley north of Brasov. Pine forest indicated he was in the mountains southwest of the city.

One of the red leggings of his peasant costume had been ripped loose in the jump. Carefully Joe rewound it and cinched the knot behind his knee. The chemicals with which the leggings had been impregnated—the chemicals

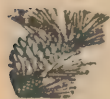
he was to deliver at the shop of Ianescu in Brasov—burned his scratched fingers.

Joe resisted the impulse to lick the wound. The chemicals might be poisonous. All Intelligence had told him about them when he had volunteered to replace the regular man, who had been killed in a practice jump, was that the mixture was highly combustible when saturated with oil. Crossing the airdrome at Nicosia he had worn high rubber boots. And the last thing the colonel had said before the take-off was, "Don't get oil on your legs."

Joe took his compass from the pouch on his belt. After orienting himself, he started east. The underbrush was thin and he made good time in spite of the darkness. Within an hour he came to the highway, its macadam surface rutted by tank treads. There was no question what road it was. Only one surfaced highway cut through the Transylvanian Alps west of Brasov.

Now that he had reached the road, he had to get rid of the compass. It had served its

purpose and might be hard to explain to a German patrol. He started to throw it back into the woods, but checked himself. No use wasting it. Some peasant might be able to use it. He dropped it at the edge of the trail. It was of German make and, if found by the trail, would not arouse suspicions. His map he buried.



THE sky was gray with dawn and mist hung like mildew around the pines when the patrol appeared on the path ahead. It was too late to duck into the woods when Joe saw them come around the curve. He had to bluff it through. The soldiers wore lumpy uniforms and long-barreled, needle-bayoneted rifles: Rumanians.

"Buena dimineata," Joe called.

The soldiers answered his good morning with unmilitary waves. They were stubby little peasants, middle-aged, and about as martial as a minuet. Gray streaked the long hair which showed under their cloth caps.

"Where do you come from?" asked the corporal, the smallest of the three. He smiled to show that his formal demand was also a polite question, from one peasant to another.

"From the border." Joe kept his voice flat, dead with the humility of the Rumanian peasant in the presence of any official. "I was going home, to my home, in Rucar. I have not been there in four years, not since my Anton was born. But it is across the border now. The Germans decided it is part of the land of our glorious ally. But the Hungarians would not let me across the border to my home, to see my son."

The soldiers stiffened. They clenched their hands and thinned their lips and braced their shoulders. The corporal spat. "Hungary!" one soldier cried, and the hate of centuries was in his voice. "Hungarians!"

"How do you stay out of the army?" the corporal asked, his voice edged with envy.

"I was in the army, the Fifth Army. But they put in German officers and the Germans released me. The Germans said I was crazy."

The privates grinned their congratulations. The corporal seemed to freeze. "Your papers, *multumeno*," he snapped.

Joe pulled from his sash the crumpled blue army release and the dog-eared yellow identification card with the picture Intelligence had so diligently doctored to make him look five years younger. The corporal studied the papers carefully, spelling out the words with his lips, peasant-fashion.

He asked the routine questions about place of birth, father's name and date of release from the army. Joe recited the answers. "With whom did you stay last night?" the corporal asked suddenly.

"With no one. I walked all night."

"With whom did you eat last? And where?"

"Why, last night. I ate last night." Joe stalled desperately, trying to guess where he was and what village lay nearest along the route behind him. "With a peasant woman. An old woman at a farm on the hillside. We had *mamaliguta*. *Mamaliguta cu branza*."

"Opreste!" The corporal's face was cold with disbelief. "So you had corn mush with an old woman," he repeated slowly. "Corn mush and cheese. And who in Rumania but the Germans has cheese now? And what German officers release Rumanian soldiers because they act crazy? You are under arrest."

The bottom of Joe's stomach iced and his mind burned with anger at himself. What a fool mistake! For five years he had studied the history and ethnography of Rumania and now, the first time it meant anything to him, he had forgotten what he had learned. Why, the first time the Teutons had come to Rumania, centuries before, they had stolen the natives' herds. They had been stealing them periodically for the next seven centuries.

Joe looked into the black muzzles above the fluted bayonets centered on his chest and, without a word, raised his hands. The corporal searched him, patting him perfunctorily on the hips and under the arms, feeling carefully into the folds of his sash and along his legs, the places where peasants usually secrete weapons. Joe had a dull, shocked disbelief in the situation. He could not really believe it was happening. His mind grasped at little things. He stared at his raised hands. It was hard to recognize them as his own, so thoroughly had Intelligence changed a scholar's soft fingers into the horny ones of a peasant.

"*Inainte!*" the corporal ordered, jabbing his bayonet in the direction Joe was to go. "And I hope you try to escape. We know what you do to our men when you catch them."

The remark puzzled Joe. "They must think I am Russian," he decided. "Our troops haven't taken any Rumanian prisoners yet, so there couldn't be any atrocity propaganda about us."

From far down the road came the roar and rattle of a truck.

"Opreste," the corporal ordered. The little group halted.

"Germans," said a private. The soldiers looked at each other, their faces uncertain. At a signal from the corporal, they ran into the woods, dragging Joe with them. Deep in the shadows, they waited motionless as the truck rattled past.

"I thought you were taking me to the Germans for questioning," Joe said, as they returned to the road.

"You thought we were fools then."

They marched on in silence. After a mile they turned south onto a faint trail which led over the forested hill into a cleared valley. Across the fields, almost fading into a granite

escarpment, stood the bleak ruins of a castle.

Joe recognized the place at once. He had visited it several years before, accompanied by Father Titu, a Rumanian Orthodox priest who had told him the story of its former owner, a German nobleman so cruel that the peasants called him *Dracula*, the dragon, and started a legend that he sucked blood. Joe wondered what had happened to Father Titu. The Hungarians had occupied his town.

The valley lay desolate under the morning sun, the low, blue-washed houses empty, weeds and thistles waist high in the fields.

"When I was last here," said Joe, "the valley was beautiful."

"There is no bitterer fruit than foreigners in one's land," the corporal replied, his voice low. He plodded along after Joe for a few steps and then shouted, "I should kill you now, here. This was my home."

"I'm sorry."

Hate deepened in the peasant's dark face. "An enemy's pity is like a thorn's shadow."



AS they approached the castle, the peasants seemed to grow in stature and firmness. The corporal looked almost commanding as he walked briskly across the worn stones to the castle door, iron-braced and permanently ajar, its sprung hinges no longer holding it clear of the flagstones.

In the courtyard the soldiers searched Joe thoroughly, with the deliberate care of the peasant. They stripped him and went over his clothes piece by piece, each man in turn studying each article. The loose shirt and tight-legged woolen pants they turned inside out and felt slowly along the seams. The long red sash and the reg leggings they carefully unfolded and spread on the flagstones. The soles of his sandals, cut from old truck tires, were probed with the points of their bayonets. After some time they gave up the search and let him dress.

Joe was blindfolded and led into the castle. It had the cool, unbreathed smell of a cave. For a long time he was pushed and dragged down steps and along passages. Running his hands along the rough walls, he noticed the change from blocks of stone to solid rock. He remembered Father Titu had spoken of underground passages.

The walls faded back beyond the reach of either hand and the scuff of rubber and ersatz leather on stone lost its muffled quality and took on an echo. They were in a big room. Joe heard the click of the soldiers' heels and the bang of their rifle butts as they came to attention.

"Here is the prisoner, Chief."

"Your name?" a deep voice rumbled. The echo made it seem out of focus.

"Anton Dimancescu, of Rucar, Your Excel-



V.E.P.

The faint breeze would not carry Joe clear of the forest. He covered his face as he plunged through the treetops.

lency. The soldiers already have my papers."

"Your occupation?"

"Farmer, Your Excellency. I had land in Rucar, given to me in the distribution after the war, Your Excellency. But the Hungarians—"

"Silence!" the room resounded with the command. "Do you know the charge against you?"

"No, Your Excellency. I know I am suspected by these fools of being a spy. But any intelligent—" The heel of a hand struck Joe



"Since you are here for your health," said Father Titu, "I would like to see you keep it."

in the mouth. He staggered back, cursing. "You son of a—" He caught himself too late. He had sworn in English.

"Vorbiti Englezeste?"

There was mockery in the Chief's question, asked almost politely. Joe could think of no way to deny he spoke English nor any way to explain where he had learned it. Unlike Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, Rumania has few returned emigrants. Joe said nothing.

"Bring him here."

The guards led him across the room. He heard the Chief push back his chair. He came near, so near Joe felt his breath and smelled the mustiness of his beard as he studied Joe's face. The Chief sucked in his breath sharply.

"Remove his blindfold. I wish to see all of his face."

One of the soldiers fumbled with the knot of the blindfold and, finding it stubborn, yanked the cloth up over Joe's head. Joe blinked into the hot light of an oil lamp held close to his face. Behind the lamp stood a man, huge and full-bearded, in the black robes of the Rumanian Orthodox church.

"Father Titu!"

The priest's booming laugh filled the cave. "I thought I recognized you, Josef. Are you again studying the sad history of our country?"

"Hardly." Joe paused. The surprise of meet-

ing again the man who had helped him most in his ethnographic studies had made him forget for a moment that Father Titu was an enemy national. "I am here for my health this time."

"It is not healthy to be taken for a spy, Josef."

The priest spoke in English with the soft, almost Spanish, accent of the educated Rumanian. "The men thought you were Hungarian."

"Hungarian!"

"Assuredly, Josef. Hungarian. If these soldiers had known you were American they would have brought you to me, but not blindfolded. America is not the enemy. You who have studied our history should know who is our traditional enemy."

"But Hungary is Rumania's ally this time, Father."

"As our allies they have stolen our land. They have many spies here now for they know that when the Germans are no longer able to protect them we will take back Transylvania."

"But still your armies fight with theirs against Russia, Father."

The priest humped his heavy shoulders. "Our leaders tried to buy Hitler's favor with our lives," he said. "There is a story told here in what we have left of Transylvania, Josef. It explains our position."

"It is about a little boy whose father has gone to war. He asks his mother where Papa has gone. The mother says, 'To fight the Russians.' The child asks why, and the mother says, 'To get back Transylvania.' 'But,' the child protests, 'the Hungarians stole Transylvania. Why does Papa not fight them?' And the mother answers, 'He cannot. They are our allies.'"

Father Titu sighed. "But many of us are fighting the Hungarians, Josef. Many soldiers, many peasants, and even a few priests. When invasion comes, we will help your troops. And now, can we help you, Josef? Since you are here for your health, I would like to help you keep it."

"I cannot tell you about my mission, Father. But I must get to Brasov at once. Is it hard to enter the city?"

"Most difficult. I had considerable trouble leaving Brasov after my last visit. But that was immediately after some thoughtless caller had left a bomb in the SS barracks. The Germans were annoyed. They had many guards at the gates." Father Titu stroked his beard thoughtfully. "It is difficult to get in or out, Josef. But it can be arranged."



BRASOV had changed only in degree, Joe decided. The walls of the Black Church were a little dirtier, the German flag on the town hall a little larger, the Rumanian flag a little shabbier. The four clocks on the town hall tower were in greater disagreement than ever, and the German civilians in their chauffeur-like black gabardine suits and high boots

a little more disagreeable. The German soldiers, resting here from service on the eastern front, had changed the most. These haggard men no longer looked like conquerors.

Padding past the terraced elegance of the Corona Hotel, Joe peered into the dining room through the blue-glass window spider-webbed with the streamers of tape pasted on months before to prevent shattering during bombings which never came. White-jacketed *piccolos* scurried from table to table serving the Nazi officers. A sign on the wall said, **NO RUMANIANS OR JEWS.**

Joe turned left onto Strade Regala and entered the marketplace. Ianescu's gift shop lay across the cobbled square between the German bookstore and the Hungarian wineshop. Excitement locked Joe's chest. His mission was almost complete.

Instead of cutting directly across the marketplace, he detoured around the edge of the square, noting the streets and where they led.

Almost afraid to look in the window, Joe idled up to the gift shop.

Ianescu sat on a high three-legged stool in the back of the store. He was exactly as Intelligence had described him: a small, fiftyish man, with graying hair and a graying mustache which emphasized his small, very black eyes and bushy black brows.

He acknowledged Joe's entrance by raising his eyebrows. His was a shop for tourists and his expression asked what a peasant wanted in it.

"*Sanatate, Domnul Ianescu.*"

"*Sanatate.*" Ianescu came to the counter. His face was white and his arms danced like those of a wire doll on a string.

"I come from Rucar," Joe emphasized the

first of the passwords. "I noticed your pottery in the window, that of the peasants doing the *hora*. I make pottery, Your Excellency. Could I make some for you?"

Ianescu's nervous fingers drummed on the glass counter and his tiny eyes jerked from Joe's face to the door at the back of the shop. He said, "But Rucar is now in Hungary. How could you bring your pottery here?"

It was not the countersign. Joe felt a twinge of alarm.

"I would work at the kiln of my uncle in Pitesti. Perhaps you would like another design?"

"No. I am not interested," Ianescu licked his dry lips. "I fear I may not be able to get rid of the stock I now possess." Again his eyes jerked toward the door leading from the shop to the living quarters. And Joe realized that Ianescu was drumming the counter with only three fingers. His rigid forefinger pointed at the door. Someone was there, listening.

"Ah, business is so difficult," Joe sighed and turned toward the street door.

"Go with God," said the little Rumanian.

The door at the back of the shop swung open. There was a guttural shout of "Halt."

"Run," screamed Ianescu in English. "Ges-tapo!"

There was a crash of glass and the sound of scuffling. Joe ducked through the door and walked with desperate deliberateness across the marketplace. To run would be fatal. There were too many Germans around. A running peasant would be stopped immediately.

Joe headed for the far side of the plaza where a group of peasant women sat behind wooden counters and hawked little piles of wilted vegetables. Ragged black umbrellas, tied to skinned



**STAR
WESTERN**
ALL STORIES NEW ALL STORIES COMPLETE
Get your copy July 12th!

LONG LOOP—SHORT LIFE!

Clee Woodin, honest cowman, refused to sell out the greasy-sack outfits who were his only friends, even though people called them the orneriest rustlers and horse-thieves in Arizona—but how could he know that the same range-law hang-noose which waited for them, was also spreading its loop for his own reckless neck?

Here's drama and high adventure, written as only *Walt Coburn* can write it. You won't want to miss—*The 77's Brand-Blot Army!*

Also In This Issue

Ride On to Blood and Glory! by Harry F. Olmsted; *Bullwhip Bill—Gunsmoke Judge-and-Jury*, by Tom Roan—and stories by John H. Latham, Les Savage, Jr. and Frank Bonham—six short novels in all!

branches, were tilted to shade the produce. Using the umbrellas as a screen, Joe worked his way to the Strade Maria.

As he slipped into the side street, he heard shouts in German from across the plaza. He broke into a run and raced down the deserted street, slowing to a walk only when he reached the church square. Crossing to the church, he pushed a crack in the double oak doors and slipped inside.

Joe remembered the Black Church well. He knew exactly where he wanted to go. In the Gothic darkness he felt along the wall until the pupils of his eyes expanded and he could see. The church was empty. He ran down the nave, crossed the transept and entered the narrow aisle of the ladies' choir.

A sigh of relief hissed between his teeth. The rugs still covered the choir wall. The collection of Turkish rugs had been Joe's reason, five years before, for first visiting the Black Church.

In the dim light of the choir he felt along the rugs until he came to the fourth one. He slipped behind it. Reaching up the wall he hooked his fingers over a niche and pulled himself up, struggling against the weight of the rug.

"This," he congratulated himself, "is one time my study of history has really helped me." Three centuries before, Michael the Brave hid from the Turks in this same niche.

Joe had barely settled in the narrow opening behind the rug when the church door creaked open. Steps echoed on the stone floor. Through a worn spot in the rug Joe saw the gleam of a flashlight. There seemed to be only two men searching the church. They went down opposite aisles and met at the east transept.

"Is it certain he came down this street?" said one in German.

"A Volksdeutsch thought he saw him enter, Captain."

"Bah! One of those popinjays. You would think they had conquered Rumania themselves, so proud and foolish. Worse than the Rumanians even. I believe nothing they say." The officer spat noisily. "However, you will search in here carefully. I will send a detail to help you."

"Yes, Captain."



JOE pressed farther back in the niche. Dust from the rug filled the air and he pinched his nose and breathed shallowly through his mouth to keep from sneezing. He listened to the remaining German plod about the church.

The soldier entered the ladies' choir and moved slowly along the aisle, thumping against the walls. The sound of the blows, muffled by the rugs, filled the church with a strange humming. As the soldier approached, Joe shifted his position, pulling his feet under him and bracing his heels against the wall.

When the jerk of the rug showed the German was pounding the wall directly below, Joe sprang.

He threw his weight high against the rug so that it fell completely across the aisle. The German grunted surprise as the heavy rug blanketed him. Then he crashed to the floor, bowled over by Joe's falling body.

Joe pulled himself to his feet and stepped back off the rug, watching the bulge move as the German tried to crawl out from under. He hoped the Nazi had dropped his gun.

The German neared the carpet's rim and Joe moved into position. He wished he had heavy boots instead of the rubber-soled peasant *opinci*. The German lurched to his feet, his back half turned, then wheeled, seeking his foe.

As he turned, Joe smashed him in the face with his right and, stepping closer, drove his knee into the man's groin. The German pitched forward, clutching at Joe's legs as he fell. Joe slammed his knee into the Nazi's face. The crunch of the breaking jawbone nauseated him. The Nazi lay motionless.

Rolling him on his back, Joe unbuckled the wide belt, the gray coat and long, gray fatigue pants, unlaced the badly worn low boots. He changed clothes in desperate haste. The Nazi's uniform was too large but by leaving on his peasant costume, Joe filled it adequately.

A handful of peasants had gathered outside the church beneath the statue of Johannes Honterus. They stared at Joe with unconcealed hatred as he shouldered past them.

"Go!" he shouted. "This is no place for Rumanian scum." They faded sullenly away. Their resentment of the German order pleased Joe. But their obedience at the moment pleased him more. There would be no witnesses around when the soldiers the officer was sending arrived at the church to aid the search. Safe in his German uniform, Joe crossed the plaza at a run. He jumped into the lone taxi parked before the Corona Hotel. "To the railway station. Fast."

The driver did not turn his head.

"To the station. Did you hear me?" Joe roared.

"This car is for officers," the driver replied cheerfully. His pleasure at refusing to obey a German was obvious.

"I commandeer your car by order of the Gestapo."

The trick worked. The driver swore under his breath, released the brake and stomped on the starter. The ancient Buick lurched forward, swerved around a corner and bounced over the uneven pavement. At the station, Joe jumped out. "Say nothing of this. By order of the Gestapo."

He ran into the low station building. A train stood at the track beyond, its engine huffing. A one-armed ticket-chopper tried to bar Joe's

path as he started for the tracks. He shoved the old man aside brusquely with a shout of "Gestapo."

The train was moving as Joe reached the platform. He sprinted alongside, caught the doorbars of a carriage and swung himself aboard into a car filled with German soldiers. They helped him in.

"Thank you. I almost missed it. My outfit is up forward."

The train was pressure-packed with men. The aisles were so jammed with standing soldiers and their duffels that Joe could barely move through them. He took nearly two hours putting three cars between himself and the soldiers who had seen him leap aboard.

Slowly the train chugged through the mountains south of Brasov. It stopped at Predeal, Sinaia and Campina to pick up cars, but military guards patrolled the platforms to keep the soldiers from getting off.

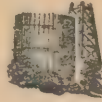
When night fell, Joe worked his way into the latrine line. It took him a long time to reach the lavatory, a boxlike room with a hole cut in the floor. Joe locked the door carefully and tested the blacked-out window. It was nailed shut. He kicked out the pane and taking one of his peasant sandals from his coat pocket, scraped loose the scallops of broken glass.

He waited until the train was laboring up a hill, then lowered himself through the window and pushed clear. He came down running, staggered a few strides and sprawled beside the track. Not until the train was past did he struggle to his feet.

A little line of pain ran up the inside of his right arm and filled a pocket in his armpit. Feeling with his left hand, Joe found a needle of stone sticking out of his right palm. The

point protruded between the knuckles of his little and third fingers. He pulled the sliver out with his teeth and set off across the moonlit fields.

Wheat, shoulder high, rattled dryly as he brushed it. Joe realized he was hungry. He stopped in a cornfield and tore off some ears and gnawed the unripe kernels. Slowly a plan was forming in his mind. If Ionescu could no longer use the chemicals, Joe could. He started out again.



THE fields humped into a brush-covered slope and Joe worked his way up through the tangle. At the crest of the rise he paused and stared, unbelieving, down onto the plain. As far as he could see rose the dark silhouettes of frame towers. Oil towers—the Ploesti fields. An occasional light glimmered but from the valley not a sound arose. To Joe, the silence did not make sense. The fields certainly must be working on a twenty-four hour schedule.

Gradually the explanation came to him. This was the dummy field the Nazis had built at the start of the Russian war. In the early days of that fighting, Russian night bombers had wasted tons of explosives on this decoy. The real fields lay to the south.

Following the ridge, Joe skirted the fake fields and swung east onto the plains. He knew where he was now and what he wanted to do. He moved swiftly, held up only once, when he had to cross the railway spur connecting Moreni and Ploesti. German sentries patrolled the tracks. In avoiding them Joe almost walked into an anti-aircraft gun concealed in a clump of trees.

Diamond Stack or Streamliner

ENJOY stories and pictures of the days when railroading was a path to Empire? Or do you want the latest information on America's Greatest Transportation System? You'll find plenty of both in the big new 146-page **Railroad Magazine**. At your newsstand, or address 205 East 42nd St., New York City 17.

RAILROAD MAGAZINE



25c PER COPY

\$3 PER YEAR

Dawn steeled the eastern sky and Joe found a thicket. He burrowed into it on hands and knees, keeping his face down to avoid the brambles. When he was deep under cover, he struggled out of the Nazi's uniform and, taking his sandals from the deep pocket, rolled the coat into a pillow. The *opinci* felt good after the stiff boots, but Joe's hand ached painfully. He chewed up a blackberry leaf and applied it to the wound. The pain eased and he slid into a deep sleep.

His dreams were touched with fever. He saw the British colonel at Nicosia again and the colonel asked him if he would take the job. But the colonel was not the Britisher at all but a little man with a gray mustache. And Joe said, "Why, you are Ionescu." And the colonel said, "If you are Dimancescu, why can't I be Ionescu?"

Then Joe was standing over the Turkish rug waiting, and when the German crawled out he was Ionescu too, and he said, "I don't want your pottery because your hand hurts." And the throbbing in his hand swelled until it filled the world with pain and sound, a great swelling roar. Joe woke up, wet with sweat, and tried to shake off the nightmare.

The roaring still filled his ears. He rubbed sleep from his eyes with his wrist and stared up, still half-drowned in sleep, at a sky filled with planes. Huge, four-motored bombers, V after V, surged south. Yellow-nosed fighters swarmed around them.

One of the fighters disintegrated in a flash of flame. Another caught fire and, trailing smoke, arched gracefully into the fields. Then the planes were gone and only the angry sound of their motors rolled back to show they had not been part of the nightmare. Joe crawled from the thicket.

To the north a black cloud funneled up and spread over the low hills, hiding the mountains beyond. Bursts of flame shot into the air and fell back to be followed, seconds later, by the distant rumble of explosions. A lone Liberator hummed out of the cloud haze. Smoke poured from its port engines and whiffs of tracer smoke lined from the gun cockles toward three hovering pursuits. Joe watched the planes until they were out of sight. He started across the fields.

He kept well away from the roads. The Germans might be recruiting salvage parties. Late in the afternoon he sighted the pipeline stretched across the fields like a paralyzed snake. Through it the oil from Ploesti oozed toward the Danube port of Girgiu and the waiting German tankers.

Lying in the tall grass, Joe studied the terrain. When he was sure of the ground, he withdrew and spent the remaining daylight hours picking wild berries. He was too excited to be hungry, but he knew he needed food.

Clouds massed before the moon and light-

ning flashed in the night sky as Joe removed his leggings. He tore the impregnated cloth crosswise into two-foot strips and rolled the pieces into balls. He tucked the cloth in his sash.

When the rain began to fall, he welcomed it. The drumming of the drops covered the noise of his movements as he pushed through the wheat toward the pipeline. It soaked his shirt and pants but the sentries guarding the line were also getting wet, he knew, and their attention was turning in upon their own discomfort.

A hundred yards from the line, Joe started to crawl. He slithered to the edge of the clearing the Germans had cut for ten yards on each side of the pipe.

Lying in the wet darkness, Joe watched the sentry pass, helmeted and heavy-footed, his ersatz shoes squelching water. For a long time Joe watched and counted. The soldier was out of sight for an average count of seven hundred on the swing north, five hundred on the south.

When the sentry thudded north again, Joe scurried across the clearing to the pipe. It was made of steel and supported by a low trestle of wood. He felt along the rough metal until he came to a joint. The link was firm. Joe crawled back into the bushes and waited for the sentry to pass again. He cursed his optimism. Somehow he had been sure he would find a crack to press the chemically treated cloth into. The sentry passed.



AGAIN Joe hurried out to feel along the tube. For more than an hour the hide-and-seek went on as he worked south along the line. He passed through territory patrolled by two other sentries.

The rain stopped and the moon glowed behind the clouds, threatening to break through. Joe was desperate. Then he felt the vibrations on the steel. The throbbing puzzled him until from the south he heard the sound of hammering. Someone was working on the pipes. Pressing his ear against the wet metal he heard the pounding plainly.

Joe hurried toward the hammering. Soon he heard the workers' voices.

"They have as many planes as Russia has soldiers," one of the workers grumbled.

"Shut up," another voice cut in. "I don't want to think of their planes."

There was a moment's silence and Joe crept closer. The first voice picked up the argument. The words were edged with despair.

"He doesn't want to think of planes! How can he help it? Answer me that, eh? The Americans come over and blow up the wells and one of their crippled bombers shoots our line full of holes before it crashes. And he doesn't want to think of planes. What else can he think of, eh? Answer me that."

Joe could see them now, three soldiers working with shaded lamps. They were putting patches over holes in the pipe. They had dug a ditch to channel the leaking oil into a pool at the edge of the field. A few blades of wheat stuck up in the pool like the spears of a drowned phalanx. The men still had their collars turned up against the rain, which no longer fell. They moved with the exaggerated deliberateness of men worn out but with hours more work to do.

Joe pulled one of the strips from his sash and felt along the ground for a small stone. He knotted the cloth around the pebble and, moving as close as he dared, lobbed it toward the oil basin. It fell with a quiet *chut* into the far side of the pool.

Back in the bushes, he scurried north. He wished he knew how long it took the chemicals to act on the oil. Impatiently, he crossed to the pipe and squirmed under the trestle. A sheet of flame shot into the air above the pool.

"Takes about two minutes to work," Joe estimated. He crouched to watch the workers through the trestle. They ran toward the fiery pool, their curses mingled with the *splut-spluttering* of the burning oil. Joe felt reluctant admiration for the speed and coolness with which they began to shovel dirt into the channel so the flames would not sweep back to the pipe.

Running in a low crouch, Joe sprinted to the bullet-torn stretch of the pipe. He pulled three wads of cloth from his sash and felt for a hole in the steel. The rents were smaller than he had expected and his swollen right hand was too stiff to force the cloth through.

He stood up, head and shoulders in full sight of the Germans should they turn, and pushed the cloth in with his left hand. Moving down the pipe a few yards he crammed in another strip, and another.

Excitement gripped him. He knew he had put in more than enough to start a fire, but he fumbled in his sash for the remaining cloth and pushed it, bit by bit, into the holes.

The shot clanged against the steel only inches from his face and *whrrrrr'd* angrily away, its sound merging with the crash of the rifle. Joe flattened on the ground and rolled for cover. On one turn he saw the sentry kneel to shoot below the pipe. The rifle flashed but the bullet thudded into the trestle frame. Another rifle crashed from somewhere near the oil pool. The bullet whined past Joe as he rolled into the wheat.

He jumped up and ran, his throat tight, his heart pounding with fear and fatigue. An unexpected furrow sent him sprawling. As he fell, a dull roar swelled behind him and the field shimmered in flame. Looking back Joe saw the Germans stagger away from the writhing pipe they had been trying to climb.

Flames spurted through the tears in the steel.

The fire raced along the outside of the pipe and flowed down the trestle. The frame caved in slowly, and the pipe parted. A wave of burning oil spread over the ground and crackled in the wheat. Explosions ripped the tube and the metal glowed white.

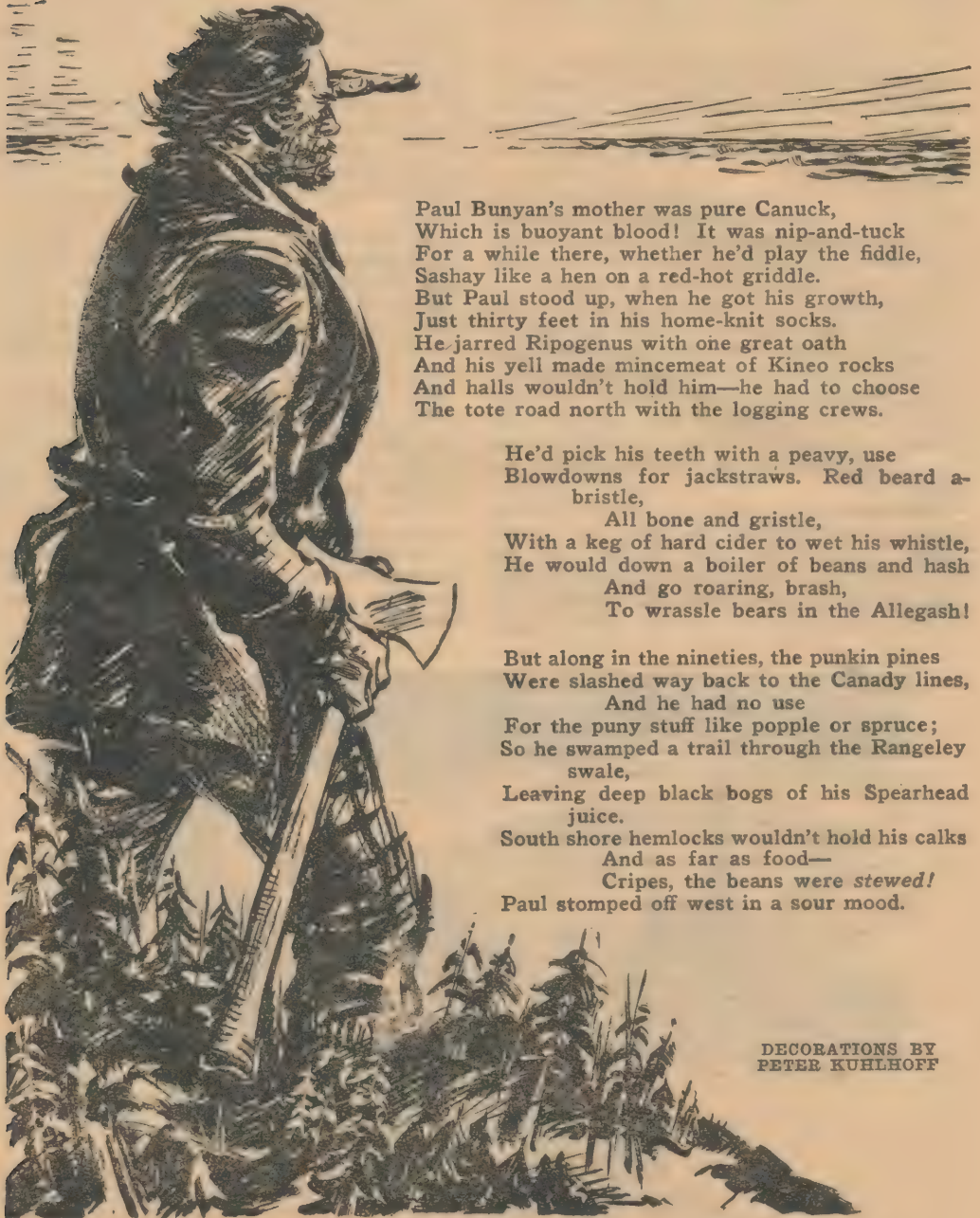
Joe turned his back on the inferno. Its heat warmed his wet body as he started east toward the Black Sea and his rendezvous with a submarine.



PAUL BUNYAN, C. G.



By FLORENCE BURRILL JACOBS



Paul Bunyan's mother was pure Canuck,
Which is buoyant blood! It was nip-and-tuck
For a while there, whether he'd play the fiddle,
Sashay like a hen on a red-hot griddle.
But Paul stood up, when he got his growth,
Just thirty feet in his home-knit socks.
He jarred Ripogenus with one great oath
And his yell made mincemeat of Kineo rocks
And halls wouldn't hold him—he had to choose
The tote road north with the logging crews.

He'd pick his teeth with a peavy, use
Blowdowns for jackstraws. Red beard a-
bristle,

All bone and gristle,
With a keg of hard cider to wet his whistle,
He would down a boiler of beans and hash
And go roaring, brash,
To wrassle bears in the Allegash!

But along in the nineties, the punkin pines
Were slashed way back to the Canady lines,
And he had no use

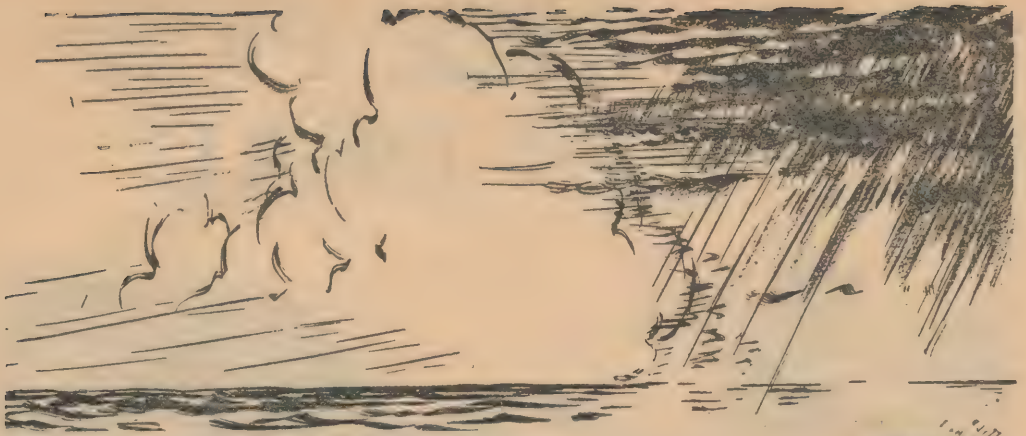
For the puny stuff like popple or spruce;
So he swamped a trail through the Rangeley
swale,

Leaving deep black bogs of his Spearhead
juice.

South shore hemlocks wouldn't hold his calks
And as far as food—

Cripes, the beans were stewed!
Paul stomped off west in a sour mood.

DECORATIONS BY
PETER KUHLEHOFF



He fooled with the cedar and Douglas fir,
 Then he had a thought
 That the redwoods ought
 To be ripe for a crop of his caliber.
 But the folks around Frisco said, "Let them be";
 And when your weight is a good half-ton
 You match your might with a mighty tree,
 Not simply squat and admire one!

Red rust ate into his broad-bit axes,
 And his cant-dog and calipers went for taxes.
 He'd brush off a buckeye from under his nose
 And swear at the piñons between his toes;
 And the yellow pine
 Did for turpentine

But it wasn't tall timber to stretch your spine.
 And they tell how he hewed him a cypress stump
 One spell, just so he could set and mump!



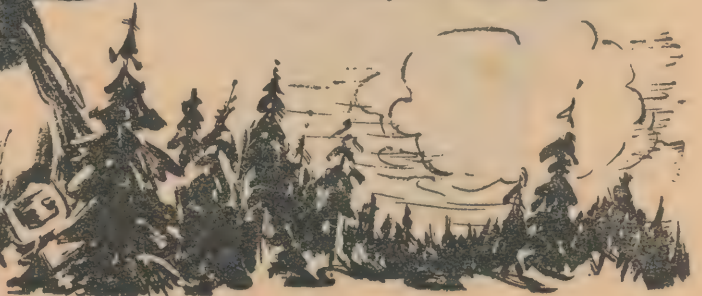
But since 'thirty-eight, now—That hurricane
 Was Bunyan hustling back home to Maine.
 And he stands on Katahdin and looks off
 south

For periscopes up the Penobscot mouth.
 In a mackinaw like a March sunset,

Roaring "Alouette,"
 He pokes through the fog banks. That last
 July

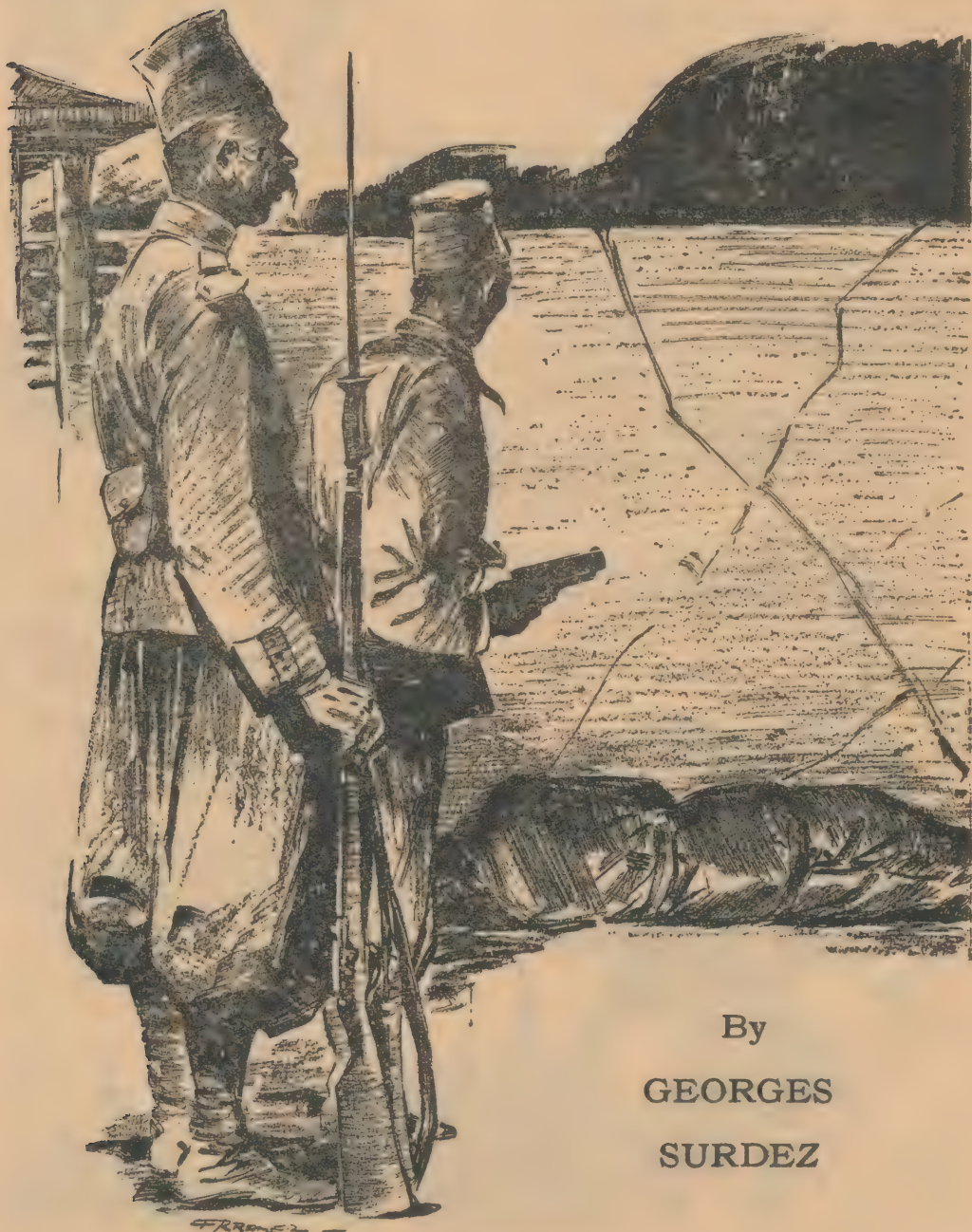
Storm was a Messerschmitt sneaking by
 Seguin. Paul yanked it out of the mist
 And gave its tail feathers one quick twist
 And dunked it soundly off Heron Neck . . .

And no kraut will cross
 Lubec while Bunyan is walking boss!



KOHLMET

THE WISE PICK THEIR DEAD



By
GEORGES
SURDEZ

"Ah, Gressent, the man from Pithiviers! You talk, yes or no?" asked the colonel gently.

ILLUSTRATED BY
FRANK KRAMER



THE June moon swam across the limpid Syrian sky, enormous and placid, sneering at the fools beneath who were wasting on slaughter a night made for romance. Flashes pulsed above the horizon with the mutter of heavy firing, but compara-



tive quiet had prevailed in this immediate sector for more than thirty minutes, following fierce, surging gusts of machine-gun and automatic rifle fire, punctuated by the thudding of mortars, the shattering explosions of their shells.

Jean Lorrain sprawled on the sandy ground, his chin resting on a bent forearm. He was twenty-six, had been a soldier for six years, and thought in military terms: The easy slope strewn with small boulders and coarse brush was very open terrain, the sinister glow of the ironic moon provided fair visibility, and the enemy, proved too alert to be surprised, was too strong to be dislodged with the means at hand. This task called for mechanized units.

The enemy—his mind caught and winced at the term. He had been born in a house within sight of the Marne River, in the very heart of France. And that enemy, too alert to be surprised, too strong to be overwhelmed, was the French.

Lorrain wore a British uniform; the steel helmet protecting his skull was of British manufacture, as were his weapons, his boots, his equipment. The men on his side were Britishers. And up that slope, holding the ridge, manning machine guns and mortars, lurking in pits and caves, were the French. A sensation of discomfort, almost of physical nausea, a species of fear that had nothing to do with the normal tenseness of combat and the nearness of death, seeped into his mind. He had to dispel it with an effort. It was he who fought for France, not those fellows across the way; he who fought for the soil of France to be redeemed, for the spirit of France that must somehow survive. He, wearing a foreign uniform and using a false name.

He could think the words that he could not speak, the words that knotted in his throat and choked him as too grandiloquent, yet too weak: He loved his country, he grieved at her humiliation; he hated the crooks, the fools, the greedy ones who had delivered her to the Boches. This was another episode in the long nightmare started a year ago, and what did it matter if the bullets now tap-tapping about him happened to be French metal?

"You're sure we have the right chaps, Lorrain?"

The Frenchman turned his head slightly. In the moonlight, under the rigid brim of the steel helmet, Captain Crawford's face formed a patchwork of black shadow and greenish skin. Again, irrelevantly, Lorrain thought that his companion, stocky and dark, resembled a Frenchman, while he, Lorrain, tall, rangy and rather fair, resembled an Australian.

"They're Senegalese, sir. Black fellows, you know. That is what we expected."

"Quite steady, aren't they?"

"They usually are when well handled. These seem to be."

"Do they know who we are, what is going on?"

"In a general way, sir. They're soldiers. They obey."



LORRAIN knew very well what Crawford was thinking. Lorrain had been attached to the battalion to serve as guide, to engage in parleys, to facilitate negotiations. He was French, an officer, had served three years in Syria. The morale of the French troops holding the country for Vichy was known to be low. Some units had come over to join the Franco-British Expedition at the start, others had given up without fighting. Still more had surrendered after a few shots. But those who had elected to fight had fought like well-trained, disciplined soldiers, perhaps without much dash, but hard and efficiently.

Tonight, with Captain Crawford and a sergeant, Lorrain had crept far ahead of the storming detachments, to establish contact with the defenders, according to instructions from the staff. But his every attempt had been met with shots and when the British had advanced on schedule, they had been met by furious fire, shelled by field-pieces screened beyond the ridge. Three attempts had been made; three attempts had been checked, with serious losses.

"I don't believe it is any use, sir," he told Crawford. "Whoever was to arrange things and let us through has failed."

"Give it another go, won't you, to make sure?"

"Yes, sir." Lorrain took breath and shouted again, "Pithiviers!"

"Shut your trap, Englishman," a Negro's voice replied.

"*Diana gam, Tirailleurs!*" Lorrain called.

"*Bonjour, l'anglais,*" the Negro yelled.

Contact established, Lorrain shouted the sentences he had been given to speak. He had lifted himself on his elbows, but a bullet spinning six inches from him made him flatten again. A pair of automatics opened fire from the side, chopping the air thirty inches above the three crouching men. From behind, a Bren aimed at the flashes, tracers spun prettily through the moonlight. It was a full minute before the detonations ceased.

"It's no use, sir." Lorrain hesitated. "They know where we are, and we're rather far from our lines."

"I know." Crawford rolled into a more comfortable position. An unlighted cigarette made a white bar across his chin. "This moonlight show's a failure. Our chaps can't cross without getting knocked about badly. The tanks should be here"—in his calm voice, he qualified the tanks—"and they're never where they're wanted, haven't you noticed?"

"Yes, sir. On the Somme last year, in particular."

"Ah, yes." Crawford tactfully changed the subject. "We're a temptation to those chaps; we might as well pack up." The bullets were fewer, but still droned and snapped overhead. The Britisher lifted himself on one hand to look around. Then he seemed to change his mind and settled back easily, gently. Lorrain did not suspect anything wrong until he spoke again. "And that's how it comes," he said. "You two pack up. I'll be fine."

"Hit?" Lorrain asked.

"Yes," Crawford said quietly. The sergeant, a large, taciturn man, crawled to him. He fingered his arm, his shoulder. "That's it, Bill. Near the neck. You'll ask Peatry to tend to my papers and gear, won't you?"

"We'll take you along, sir, don't worry."

"Too much light. After the damn moon goes down."

"We'll take you along, sir."

"I'd rather not. My chest hurts a bit. Leave me here, Bill. I say, Lorrain—" Crawford seemed to hesitate. "Those black fellows are all right, aren't they?"

"Yes, sir. But we'll get you away."

The sergeant had hooked his arm under the captain's sound shoulder, started to haul. But their voices, the movements, had attracted attention. A rifle grenade burst a few yards away in a fusing orange flame. There was the shrieking of fragments, then a rain of pebbles and sand. A second followed, and a third. The three hugged the ground. Crawford was resting on his side. The cigarette now made a dark streak across his chin. It was soaking with blood.

"It's no good, Bill," he whispered.

An agile man progressing in darts and dashes might have some chance of making the rear. But three men crawling, two dragging a third, would be riddled or blown to shreds within twenty yards.

"Sergeant," Lorrain said.

"Yes."

"We need a stretcher. You go and—"

"Not likely." The sergeant was firm. He was an intelligent man, but to him, British uniform or not, Lorrain was a "Frenchie," hence of an inferior breed not quite to be trusted. "No, not likely. It's all three, or no go."

"I'll stay with your officer."

"So will I."

Two more of the hellish little bombs struck close. But it took several minutes of arguing and Crawford's urging to convince the sergeant. At length, he patted his officer's shoulder awkwardly and started away. At once, the deliberate crackle of the *Lebels* started. Lorrain knew the noncom had been spotted. Machine guns and automatics released short bursts—*tatata-tata-tata!*

Lorrain thought that he might never know if the sergeant had made it. That was war: Men came into your life for a few days, a few

hours, crawled away, and you heard no more about them.

Crawford coughed, gurgled, the dark smear on his chin shimmered—coughing up blood. He grunted, turned over as a grenade exploded nearby. Crawford would die if he were left here unattended much longer. Lorrain could not leave him to die alone. But he would not lie at his side for hours to watch him die. He turned carefully to look at the British line, two hundred yards away. Nothing showed there; he could not be sure that the sergeant had reached it to report.

Why worry? Sooner or later, one of those grenades would land squarely on them. Suddenly, the enemy position crackled and boomed. The British fire answered, tracers curled and weaved.

Lorrain was conscious of movement near by, turned his head, had a brief glimpse of a sooty face, white teeth. Then something hit his face. . .

CHAPTER II

THE COLONEL'S METHODS



WHEN Lorrain's head cleared completely, he was in a hallway, guarded by gendarmes. After being knocked out—by a rifle butt or a club, he would never know which—he vaguely remembered being dragged into a trench, questioned by several men. He recalled that he had given the sergeant's name, William Knight, as his own.

He had been led out of the trenches, taken to a small automobile van. He had seen troops camped in the plain, the flames of field guns licking in orange stabs across the moonlight. The sky had been alive with lights—some floating, drifting colored streaks, others sharp, swift-dying flickers. From inside the closed car, he had heard several times the chugging of powerful motors, tanks or tractors, and the tramping of troops. The Vichy Government intended more than a token resistance—that was evident from the gathering of forces.

The gendarmes guarding him were Lebanese; thick-set, swarthy, mustached men. They had the reputation of being hard. Like police everywhere, they obeyed the orders of the government in power without question or hesitation. They had treated Lorrain courteously, but had given him a thorough, professional frisk, taking away the contents of his pockets.

He presumed that the buildings he had seen when he had been pushed out of the car were some sort of field command post, but he did not know where he was. At some signal, the sergeant of the guard opened a door, led the way into a rather small, plainly furnished room. A large acetylene lamp sputtered on a big table, behind which sat a colonel with Lorrain's few papers before him.

"Leave us, Sergeant," he said, "but remain outside."

Lorrain stood at attention. The officer did not look at him, but rubbed his fingers absently over his chin. From his ribbons, he had served in World War I and in the colonies. Close to fifty, he appeared a hard, not too intelligent soldier. His head was big, shaped somewhat like a cube with rounded corners, his skull covered with close-cropped black hair that almost reached his eyebrows. The chin was hard and strong, the mouth firm, and under a hooked nose that made him resemble an owl, grew a short, graying mustache.

"Lieutenant Knight, British Army?" he asked in a whispering voice, at last, still busy with the wallet's contents.

"Yes, sir."

"You may sit down. I do not speak English. We can use either French or German, whichever is easier."

"I speak French better than German, Colonel."

"I should say so." The colonel smiled. "I prefer French, too. My German was acquired in schools." He shoved the stuff across the table. "You may have this back. None of it is of any interest to me. You may smoke. Your own or these—" He indicated a box of Turkish cigarettes. Lorrain smiled and accepted. Huguenain lighted one for himself, looked at his prisoner. "You destroyed your papers?"

"To be correct, I left them behind. I knew I ran the risk of capture."

He knew that his voice sounded insincere and strained, and he felt oddly breathless. Meeting the colonel's glance had shaken him like a blow in the stomach. The man had queer eyes, not menacing, not angry—queer. They were deeply sunk, yet the pupils were large, a peculiar chestnut color with a reddish tinge.

"I'm an Intelligence officer, and we both know what you English call 'the game.' It is my duty to ask you a number of indiscreet questions which it is your duty to ignore. How many men you have in this sector, for instance; the names and numerals of the units, number of cannon, tanks; who is your commander. You decline, of course?"

"Yes, Colonel."

"You know your rights as a prisoner of war, so there is no use playing a comedy, threatening you. Especially as we both know the aim of this invasion, the exact nature of this war, which is not a war at all. But while it lasts, we must play the game. I must interview you, and you must refuse to answer questions. So"—he extended his hand, square and muscular, back and wrist covered with fine black hair—"I'm glad to have met you. My name is Huguenain. I wish you luck and prompt liberation."

"Thank you, Colonel."

Lorrain rose and hesitated. Was this all? Huguenain had reached for a folder of papers,

looked up, seemed surprised to see him still standing there, smiled in embarrassed, polite dismissal. Lorrain saluted, crossed the room and reached for the door handle.

"Lieutenant."



THE call was made in a very casual, soft voice. Lorrain turned and the colonel indicated the chair again. "There is another formality which I forgot. I have a telephoned

report about your capture with Captain Crawford. I understand his case, but yours? You were unwounded, not cut off." The hand lifted. "I have been in service long enough to know that a man's courage is not a bar of steel, solid metal all its length. Nevertheless, one man managed to escape—"

"Captain Crawford was severely hurt, Colonel." Lorrain's face colored somewhat. "I ordered a sergeant with us to leave and bring stretcher-bearers."

"You considered the sergeant more valuable to the English army than yourself?"

"Not exactly, Colonel. It's more complex—"

"Very much more than appears on the surface, eh, Lieutenant? You probably were the chap who was shouting in French before that position for more than an hour? You appear very familiar with ranks, titles, of the French Army. You even used a Woloff greeting for our Tirailleurs."

"I qualified as an interpreter, Colonel." Lorrain smiled. "I may reveal that we go through a period of training."

"Of course, of course." Huguenain sank into deep meditation, his eyes veiled by purplish lids.

"I have a report that you called out a word repeatedly—Pithiviers. Why?"

"I corresponded with a young lady living there, as part of my school work. Somehow, I thought I could engage conversation—"

Huguenain smiled thinly.

"You have been informed of the general order here that Frenchmen found serving with the British are to be shot? I see you have. But, British or not, you made up your mind which side you were on before France and England exchanged shots. For all I care, you may remain British. But to remain British, you must give me the information I need."

"If not military, Colonel, I'm at your service."

"What was to happen when you called Pithiviers?" Huguenain turned very serious. "No nonsense."

"To—well—gain the good will of a possible—"

"We shall cease to get along so amiably if you keep on that track. It was certainly a pass-word." Huguenain grinned. "There are remarkable coincidences, you know," he continued. "You come to a certain spot along our line, occupied by a certain company of Senegalese Tirailleurs. The name you call out is



The colonel smiled thinly. "You have been informed that Frenchmen found serving with the British are to be shot?"

that of the birthplace of the captain who until that very evening commanded that company. He was suspected for other reasons. The evidence is circumstantial, but a man might give his birthplace as a password. Men close to death are sentimental."

"I assure you—"

"Don't speak nonsense, Sergeant!"

The door opened. The Syrian gendarmes filed in.

"Secure the prisoner and keep him under close guard. In ten minutes, have him and the prisoners from cells Two and Three where you know." As the policemen fastened Lorrain's wrists behind his back, the colonel went on, "I know the laws of war, my young friend, and will not expose loyal Frenchmen to reprisals. I believe you are French, I believe you were an officer. But until I am sure, you are safe. If you are an Englishman, as you claim, you're doing your duty, in uniform. I'll apologize, if necessary in writing, for the bonds."

"Meanwhile, I think you will be interested to know just how I proceed. No kid gloves with traitors."

Lorrain was led out of the building through a back door, emerged in a long, narrow courtyard, between the buildings and a surrounding wall. The roofs cut off the moonlight so that while one part was lighted, the other was quite dark. Somehow, the spot made him uneasy. He felt the sensation of living in a nightmare closing in again. Somewhere, not very far

away, muffled explosions shook the night; probably a burning ammunition dump. French ammunition, blown up by British shells! Like most soldiers, he had at times thought of capture and death, but he had never expected that his captors, his killers, would wear French uniforms, be Frenchmen.

"Bad times, these," he remarked to the Syrian cop at his side.

"Ah, yes, indeed, *monsieur l'anglais*. Hard days for all of us in Syria!" He sighed wearily. "But what is there to do save do one's job as ordered?" He broke off, mumbled, "Poor fellows, poor fellows."

Armed men marched a group of prisoners into sight. Seven of them. They were pushed against the outer wall, in the light. All seven were bareheaded, all were manacled. Young men, French officers. The guards stood aside, bayonets glistening in the dark.

Huguénain popped into sight, kepi tilted on his skull, walking with quick, strutting steps. He snapped, "The roll."

A man stepped forward. There was the small, brilliant disk of a pocket torch lighting up a sheet of paper, a muscular hand, the gold stripes of a senior-sergeant. A voice tolled out, "Captain Gressent, Jean, Eleventh Bis R.T.S.; Lieutenant Devanel, Aristide, R.M.I.C.—" until each of the seven had answered.

Then Colonel Huguénain started to walk back and forth before the group, one half of his body in the light, the other in shadow. The

stripes on his sleeves, the buttons on his tunic, the braid of his kepi, scintillated as he turned. It had a disturbing effect, almost hypnotic, on the nerves. Then he talked as he walked, in an audible, quiet voice.



"YOU are, God forgive me, French officers. You are also—I say it with deep shame—traitors. Your duty was to fight for France, anywhere and everywhere, not according to

your personal political convictions but in obedience to the orders received from your chiefs, who in turn got orders from the constituted government.

"In the normal course of things, you shall be tried, and those convicted of being guilty of intelligence with the enemy will of course be shot. Whether you acted as you did from what you believe were noble and patriotic motives is not the question. The land which France trusted you to defend has been invaded by a foreign power. If you conspired to turn over any part or parcel of French territory to the enemy, you are guilty.

"There is a crisis in Syria. England has long wanted to control Syria. It may be her right to covet what we have, but it is our duty to check her. What England failed to achieve by arming the Druses and the Bedouins against us for two decades, she is seeking to do now, under the guise of liberation, employing on an equal footing Druses, Bedouins, Australians and misguided Frenchmen. England is using Frenchmen's humiliation, their hatred of Germany, for her own purposes. Our blood and shame will be coined into gold for the Bank of England.

"I reached Syria two days ago with a special mission: to clean out the traitors, the deluded, the weaklings, the fools, the saps. I shall accomplish it with any and all means. You were arrested after due investigation; I have proof against each of you. But we haven't the complete list of the weaklings and the traitors. One of you will give it to me. I have methods—"

"We know your methods, Colonel," a quiet voice spoke from the row of prisoners. "And we have decided to risk them. Our families in France may suffer. That is what you have brought to France—government by menace, blackmail, terror—"

"We are saving France, my friend," Huguenain went on with his monologue. "We need the names of the agents you got into contact with, your method of communicating with the invasion forces. There is a British agent present who reached an assigned place at a given time, shouted a password. He knew where to go, when, what to say. How was that information handed over to the enemy so quickly? We occupied those positions in the afternoon. That I must know, and know tonight. Within an hour. Before dawn. It should not be difficult.

A man who betrays his country can repent—"

"And betray his friends, Colonel?"

"I don't appreciate irony in a serious matter."

"We have nothing else left, Colonel."

"And that not for very long. I'm afraid I shall put a serious strain on your sense of humor." The colonel stepped forward to face the first man in line. He took a large automatic pistol from the holster at his belt, looked down at it a second. "What is your name, my friend?"

"Devanel."

"You admit having dealt with enemy agents?"

"I do not."

"Let's not waste time. You are for de Gaulle?"

"Naturally. I was eager to join the Gaullists. I tried twice and failed. Today as before, I'm with them."

"Why?"

"Because I'm French."

"You— But we have no time to argue. I'm in a hurry." Huguenain lifted the pistol until the muzzle touched the tip of the officer's chin. "You know what I want to hear. Come, do you talk, yes or no? One—"

"I know you're quite capable of assassinating."

"Two. You are quite right. And—three."

The shot thudded out. Devanel dropped with his face blown away.

Lorrain started forward, instinctively, to protest. The kindly Syrian gendarme, who had to do his job, kicked him in the groin, then smacked the butt-plate of his carbine on his chin. When the waves of pain ebbed somewhat and his head cleared, Lorrain dimly recalled hearing a second shot. Now there were two bodies on the ground, and Huguenain stood before the third man.

"Your name?"

"Gressent."

"Ah, the man from Pithiviers. *Tu parles, oui ou non?*" the colonel asked gently. "You talk, yes or no?"

"You would expect me to, would you?"

"One . . . two . . . three."

And the third shot slapped out. Huguenain dodged aside from the falling body.

"Born at Pithiviers, 1909; died at Yanook, Syria, June 1941." He hefted the pistol on his palm, spoke cheerfully. "There is enough for all." He took two brisk steps to face the fourth man in line. "What's your name, my friend?"

The fourth man replied in a mumble.

"Can't hear you. Speak clearly."

Huguenain propped the man's chin with the gun muzzle. Lorrain clenched his teeth, closed his eyes, waited for the shot. Nothing followed but a slithering sound, a thump, then a brittle chuckle from the colonel. He opened his eyes. The fourth man was stretched face down on the ground.

At a sign from Huguenain, two of the guards stepped forward, lifted him. He hung limply in their grasp.

"Nothing the matter with him," the colonel explained quietly. "Just his way of saying yes. A very emphatic nod." He suddenly seemed in excellent humor, caught the prisoner's chin between thumb and fingers, snapped his head up. "Come, come, stand straight! What the devil, you're alive. All right, take him into my office." He addressed the other prisoners. "Some of you are lucky. A little better control, a shred more guts, and it would have been your turn."

He took three or four turns in the yard, halted to face the prisoners again. "If any of the gentlemen feel talkative, I might have an interesting proposition. Far more attractive than a court-martial. I can inform you that military tribunals have instructions to be swift and severe. All right, take them away."

"Where do we put them, Colonel?"

"Cell Three. They'll all fit in now."

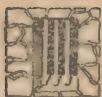
"And the English officer?"

"With them. Why not? Their good friend, you know. Gentlemen, I wish you a very good night."

He walked to a door, vanished.

CHAPTER III

DAINGEROUS ADMISSIONS



LORRAIN was untied, pushed into a cell with the rest. He was in a fairly spacious room with white-washed walls and a cement floor.

He judged by oil stains that it had been used as a garage. The guards let down an iron bar across the double doors, snapped a padlock. After some fumbling, one of the survivors, a slender young chap, lighted a candle. Then he searched through his pockets, until Lorrain offered him his cigarette case.

"Eh?" the man looked at him oddly, then shrugged. "Yes, thanks."

Only one of the three refused. He had sunk on a bench and was weeping quietly, his face in his hands, muttering, "The slob, the slob, the slob—" The other two smoked, walked about quickly, with jerky gestures of the arms. Lorrain leaned against a wall and watched them.

They had stood in that line, waiting for their turn, knowing that Huguenain would not stop, and wondering, wondering. What would they do when their turn arrived? They still wondered and would always wonder.

The fourth man had not wanted to talk. Terror had overwhelmed his conscious will, sheer terror had knocked him out. To stand one moment, healthy, strong, young, then to lie on the ground, dead, with one's face blasted to a bloody pulp . . . his body had cracked. Now he was worse than dead. He would always think of the three before him, the three who had been brave and loyal, whose sacrifice he had made useless, almost ridiculous.

Lorrain stepped before one of the walkers. "My name is—"

"Skip it, skip it."

"But—"

"We'll smoke your cigarettes, and thanks. And we don't blame you for your job, but save your spittle. You weren't put in here by accident. I know the ropes, and that smacking around you got—good scenery. But we know why you're here."

Lorrain stepped aside. They thought him an informer, a stool-pigeon. Huguenain had probably planned this, too, to keep them under stress in case he should need them. Huguenain—Lorrain was beginning to fear him, not because he was a killer, but because he so evidently enjoyed playing with those he killed. That long tirade had been needless.

Lorrain knew that there was but a handful of men such as the colonel to hold things together in Syria, but that handful held the controls. Patiently forged discipline and obedience did the rest. A clique of ruthless bandits sprung from somewhere—in times of national calamities, such men rise fast.

The prisoners were absorbed in their own thoughts, or afraid to speak before Lorrain. He made another effort.

"I assure you—" he started.

"For God's sake, leave us alone!" The man's voice rose to a shriek. "Skip it, I say! You're no more English than I am. I remember your face from somewhere—"

"I'll explain."

The man looked around him, picked up a heavy stool.

"I'll brain you."

Lorrain gave up, sank down on the bench.

A hand on his shoulder wakened him.

"Colonel wants to see you."

It was dark outside, and from the freshness in the air, dawn was not very far off. The firing was continuing, but in a sort of perfunctory, matter-of-fact fashion. No attack was going on anywhere in the sector. Lorrain turned once and saw, over the wall, distant streaks of colored lights, signal rockets.

Huguenain was waiting for him in the same room. He probably had not slept at all, for that big square face seemed carved from greasy kitchen soap. He was signing papers, which two orderlies handled. The first would blot a sheet as it was passed to him, hand it to the second who in turn handed it to someone outside the door. Paper routine, always important in the army, assumed a sort of frenzied extension in time of war.

"Sit down, Lieutenant."

Lorrain sat down. The colonel was using a fountain pen, and repeatedly cleaned the nib on a piece of blotter as he reread one of the papers swiftly.

"You understand that when I want information I get it." Huguenain signed four papers.



"I have several ways of disposing of you, my friend. The first and most expeditious you can surmise."

"What time yesterday did you get that password?"

"What password, Colonel?"

"We'll humor you. Pithiviers."

"I don't remember getting a password, Colonel."

"I see."

Huguenain reached down, brought his pistol into sight, using his left hand, right hand still holding the pen. "I'm sorry I cannot devote all my attention to this. You have five minutes."

The weapon was laid on the table. It was five feet away, within reach of a quick movement, but there was a gendarme standing in a corner and another standing behind Lorrain's chair. The young man thought that the question was unimportant, that it did not matter what time the password had been communicated to him. Yet he understood that if he told that, there would be other questions, that the Vichy commissioner was merely using that one item as one pulls the bung from a cask.

The best thing was to keep silent, to stop thinking. That was what cracked up a man's will, thinking. Lorrain knew now that the first men last night had not been tested quite as much as the fourth, that he had broken under greater load. Each new shot had cubed the fear. For instance, putting the fear of death in the first man, Devanel, at one hundred, the second man had been subjected to ten thousand—no, one million and—well, he, Lorrain, was starting at one hundred. . . .

Huguenain went on signing. "Five minutes are up." He lifted the pistol and pushed it back in the holster.



LORRAIN'S heart then started to pound painfully. He felt the sweat break out over his body, drip down his face.

"Is William Knight an invented name?"

"No, it was the sergeant—" Lorrain broke off and clenched his hands. How simply he had answered that! What a nervous fool he was! The man was going to ask him his real name next, and for all he knew, he would give it.

A young captain came in, conferred about something or other, in a high-pitched, well-bred voice. "As my colonel desires. . . . Yes, my colonel. . . . Of course, my colonel—" until Lorrain wanted to rise and cuff him. The man had no right to use that parlor voice within the sound of cannon, damn him!

"That's all for now," Huguenain announced. The two orderlies gathered cartons and folders, departed. Lorrain was alone with the colonel, save for the two Syrian cops. "Now—" He interrupted himself, listened.

Lorrain heard, as he did, the sudden increase in firing, the distant ripping and rippling of automatic and rifle fire. The colonel reached under the table, brought out a field-telephone. "Third Bureau. Yes." A pause. "Colonel Huguenain here. What is going on? . . . Find out. . . . Give me the general of brigade. . . . Locate him, then. . . . I want to be informed at once. I'll hold you responsible."

He looked at Lorrain. "We were saying? Oh, yes. I have several ways of disposing of you, my friend. The first and most expeditious you can surmise. Then I can act on your own admission, add you to the officers to be tried. Or I can know nothing and simply order you turned in with the British officers we hold. You sit there, at the end of the table. I'll give you some paper, a pencil, and you write down yourself which it will be."

"You know, Colonel."

"No, I don't know, and neither do you. A man constantly surprises himself with either his foolishness or wisdom." He picked up the telephone almost before the signal. "Yes . . . I want to talk to him in person. . . . Very kind of him. I'll be over."

He nodded at the gendarmes, left the room. Lorrain fingered the pencil, looked at the paper before him. It amounted to a questionnaire, but the questions were unimportant, concerning information available, certainly, to the French Intelligence in Syria. For a moment, Lorrain toyed with the idea of filling in fantastic answers, but Huguenain had so convinced him of his foolishness that he feared humorous replies might contain information of value.

There was a window high in the wall op-

posite, and Lorrain saw that it was turning gray, then mauve. Then, distant at first, coming nearer, he heard the droning of airplane motors. The gendarmes shuffled restlessly. Lorrain smiled. This building would not give much protection against a bomb. But the machines passed by; nothing happened.

Colonel Huguenain returned in fifteen minutes. He looked down at the paper as he went to his chair. "Not doing very well, eh? Keep at it," he said, in the same voice a professor uses to a dull pupil. Two minutes later, the young lieutenant who had threatened to brain Lorrain in the cell was brought in. He wore handcuffs.

"*Eh, bien, Garcin,*" Huguenain greeted him, "what have you to say to me?"

"That I don't think it does our prestige any good for an officer in uniform to be seen in irons, Colonel."

"On the contrary—it shows that French justice is no respecter of individuals. Now, the Englishman and I got along famously. Are you ready to answer questions?"

Garcin's answer was short and quick.

"All right." The automatic pistol reappeared, was laid on the table. The gendarmes became alert. They knew that while the colonel would be the first target, they could count on the leftovers if a prisoner got the gun.

"A butcher knife might suit you better," Garcin said.

"You have five minutes, Garcin."

Lorrain saw the young man go through what he had experienced not long before. Garcin knew that Huguenain would use that pistol without hesitation. The scene last night would remain etched on his memory forever. He tried to keep his eyes from the pistol, from Huguenain's hairy hand, but they darted back to them constantly. *In five minutes—no, in four, he will reach out and—*Lorrain wondered if his cheeks had taken on that same wooden appearance. He remembered now that his palate, his lips had felt atrociously dry, rasping—so he had probably licked his lips as Garcin was now doing.

"Time's up," Huguenain declared. He lifted the gun, and even Lorrain was not sure what he would do. But it was the same trick as for him. The pistol was slid back in the holster. "I guess it will have to be a trial, Garcin."

Lieutenant Garcin settled visibly in the chair. Tiny streams of sweat oozed down his cheeks, fringed his chin. Suddenly, startlingly, he belched, then said automatically, "Pardon."

Huguenain watched him for a few seconds in silence.

"How much did Chemeray tell you he would give you?" he asked.

"There was no mention of money," Garcin snapped.

The next instant a look of pain and fury passed over his face, and from Huguenain's



Lorrain's heart then started to pound painfully and he felt the sweat break out.

smile Lorrain understood that the poor chap had been tricked into a dangerous admission.

"So it was Chemeray, my friend."

"I don't know him."

"You—" Huguenain broke off to answer the phone. "Yes. . . . Impossible. . . . Complete lack of energy. . . . What can I do save follow the movement? . . . All right." The colonel hung up and sent for the foppish young captain with the sweet voice. "I have to find the general again. Get everything packed up and ready—we may have to move quickly."

"My good heavens, *mon colonel!*"

"My good heavens, yes," Huguenain mimicked his subordinate's tone angrily. "Do you have to talk that way? What happened? Our damn line's smashed in, one battalion surrendered, another ran out. And not before Australians, you understand; before Hindus, Hindus! Damn it, we'll have run before every race on earth before we're through—"

"Hindus, Colonel, Hindus!"

"And some tanks and Bren carriers, and aviation. Anyway, it adds up to the same total: We're licked again. But we'll see, we'll see—"

He stormed out with the captain following obediently at his heels.

The captain, however, returned after a few minutes with a group of privates who gathered cartons and folders in leisurely fashion, took out the phone. One of the Syrian gendarmes was bold enough to step before the captain as he was leaving.

"Our orders, Captain?"

"Don't know, don't know. See the gendarmier captain."

Outside, the tumult was increasing, shouted orders, whistles, the chugging of motors, the unmistakable sounds of hurried departure. The two gendarmes on guard grew restless. A series of explosions nearby, which sent glass tinkling to the cement somewhere close and brought dust from floor and ceiling, did not reassure them.

"We better get out," said one.

"Not me. The colonel said for us to keep the prisoners here."

"I'll locate the captain and ask him. You stay."

"You'll probably find him by our vans, next to the lockup."



THE two prisoners exchanged glances. Both of them knew that as the British advanced, their artillery would probe the buildings with a few shells. But the nervous gendarme in the corner, with a gun in his hands, effectively prevented conversation. Yet it was he who broke the silence.

"The Hindus, Mr. Englishman, are they savages?"

Thus addressed, Lorrain took a longer look at the man. It was the kindly chap who had kicked him.

"Savages, no." He shrugged. "But unless one has the luck to find a white officer with them, they'll mutilate one." He held up his fingers like scissors. "They do not kill, however."

After a lengthy pause, the Syrian asked, "You bear me no grudge?"

"Not at all."

While the sound of cannon and rifle fire was not coming perceptibly nearer, one could sense debacle in the air. The gendarme went to the door, opened it, looked up and down the hallway. He was jittery and his brigand's mustache trembled. Lorrain became aware of a new danger. It was as if he could read the fellow's thoughts through his forehead: Two live prisoners might escape and their guard be blamed, but if—

Garcin's glance met his and he saw the slender lieutenant had the same thought: A double shooting to rid himself of responsibility would not mean much to a product of the ruthless native cops. What made it almost certain was the friendly smirk on his face.

"Be patient," he said suddenly. "The colonel will be back."

"May I light a cigarette?" Lorrain asked.

"Yes."

Lorrain rose to fumble for his case. Then he took his chair, flung it at the gendarme's legs. Taken off guard, the man's eyes followed the hurtling chair for a second, as Lorrain had planned. He closed in on the gendarme, crouching, managed to catch his right wrist, neutraliz-

ing the gun for the moment, and grabbed for the throat with his free hand. Being younger, taller and presumably stronger, he thought he could subdue the cop in a few seconds.

But the other was an old hand at in-fighting, did not grow panicky. He brought down his chin, took hold of Lorrain's thumb with his free hand, jerked the fingers loose, bumped his skull against the young fellow's jaw, clawed at his groin; swiftly, almost rhythmically, as if performing figures in a familiar dance.

Fortunately, Garcin came from behind, slipped the chain of his handcuffs over the gendarme's head, scraping nose and chin, tightened it around the throat. Lorrain felt the muscles of the wrist grow limp and was about to call to the other to ease up, when the policeman tried to tear free with sudden energy.

"Watch that gun, watch that gun!" Garcin panted.

He was dodging kicks aimed at his shins, and the group was stumbling about. That ghastly struggle seemed to Lorrain to last a very long time, and probably did last three minutes. It was too much like murder for Lorrain's taste, but what could he do? Yes, two men against one; two young, strong fellows against a chap who had attained middle-age. But that man was as dangerous as a cobra, armed with a pistol, and determined to get rid of them, casually, as if they had been sick cattle.

"Watch that gun—" Garcin repeated. At last, Lorrain was able to get hold of the weapon. The gendarme was hanging limp from the short chain, and the officer stooped to ease him to the floor. "He keeps a key for these in one of the cartridge-holders inside his holster."

He was right. Lorrain found the key and freed Garcin, who left the chain around the victim's neck. Lorrain unwound it, but to no purpose. "Done for," he said. "Better get him where the door will hide him." They dragged the massive body against the wall. There Garcin stripped it of the holster-harness, offered it and the gun to Lorrain.

"Better keep it," Lorrain suggested. "I'm in British uniform."

Garcin touched Lorrain on the sleeve. "About you know—sorry."

"Skip it. What do we do?"

"Wait here, I suppose. How long before the English come?"

"I don't know," Lorrain said. "I'd say the front was about twenty kilometers off; the break came less than an hour ago. Our men may have rallied and checked them." They stared at each other for a moment: Yes, *their* men, men they had trained and led, were fighting the British who might save them.

"*Drôle de guerre*," Garcin commented.

That had been the catch-phrase in France between September 1939 and May 1940: a phony war, a peculiar war. And it was not becoming less peculiar: They had just murdered—and

murder was the word for a strangling—a man in French uniform.

"I hope Huguenain comes back in here." Garcin held up the gun. "The swine gave me a cold sweat twice lately."

"I think he's mad," Lorrain declared.

"No, just a murderous swine. . . . Eh, what you were saying about the Hindus to—" Garcin snapped his chin toward the gendarme. "True?"

Lorrain laughed. "No. They're sticklers for rules of war. Just hold up your hands. I saw a lot of them in Ethiopia."

"You were with the Gaullists there?"

"Yes. Escaped through Portugal last year."

They started again: Several men were tramping along the hallway, doors banged open and shut. Their door swung open in turn. A burly French captain stood there, a gendarme, steel helmet on his head, a sarcastic smile on his face. Garcin saluted.

"Well, well, don't you know we're evacuating?"

"We're waiting for Colonel Huguenain, Captain."

The men of the patrol were in the hall: Syrian military police. The captain, by turning his head slightly to the right would see the dead gendarme through the slit between the door and the jamb.

"I wouldn't wait much longer, Lieutenant. This building will go up in about seven minutes. Is the prisoner in your charge?"

"Yes, Captain."

"Come along, then."

They obeyed. What else could they do? A flash of suspicion, a side glance, and the captain would spot the dead gendarme. And if military gendarmes hold the affection of few, they have a fierce corps loyalty. The officer stepped back into the hall with them, closed the door gently, laughing.

"One has to be so careful of private property!"

CHAPTER IV

"ONE SHOULD ALWAYS SHOOT"



IT WAS broad day outside. The courtyard was almost empty. Only six or seven cars were left. The gendarme captain led the two to a captain of the Transportation Corps, a lean little chap wearing gold-rimmed glasses. He explained their plight as he imagined it.

"Colonel Huguenain's staff left long ago. The colonel is out there somewhere." The transportation man indicated the southeast, where the fighting was going on. "Let's see—two places, one prisoner. Over there, the American truck."

The truck was an old machine, covered with a canvas top. The chauffeur was French; the guards beside him were Lebanese. The inside

was crowded already, containing a dozen Frenchmen, most of them young fellows of the aviation force under open arrest for refusing to fly against the invaders, and three young British officers, dirty and ragged, one of them a flyer with his right arm in a sling. A senior noncom and another Lebanese guard completed the load. Garcin, by virtue of his rank, took charge. The Britishers crowded to make room for Lorrain.

In less than three minutes after leaving the room, the two were rolling in the open, one truck in a long caravan of vehicles churning up a tremendous veil of sand dust over the sun-baked earth. The jolting was severe, and much attention was devoted to balance and hand-holds. Perspiration started as the heat grew and the dust whipped in.

"Where were you taken?" Lorrain asked the Britisher next to him.

"Oh, somewhere out there. Patrol."

They exchanged a few more words, then the three Britishers smiled faintly.

"A bit rank," said one, to no one in particular.

"Isn't it?" another agreed. "Londoner, aren't you?"

Lorrain nodded and laughed. Twice within twelve hours, he had been mistaken for a stool-pigeon.

To a man who had seen the French retreat from the Somme to the Loire, this retreat was a de luxe trip. There was water and there was some food. Lorrain would have liked to inform the Britishers of his exact status, of the reason for his wearing a uniform without "France" on the shoulder and yet speaking with an accent. But if he was certain that he was not an informer, he could not be certain that one was not planted in the truck.

The young French aviators seemed to feel no such restraint. Evidently, not all doubters met with as persuasive a Vichyite as Colonel Huguenain. They made no secret of their affection for de Gaulle, of their liking for the British. Most of them came from one squadron. On the preceding afternoon, given orders to fly out on a bombing mission, they had refused. Their commander had argued with them, then packed them into a bus to go and see the general commanding the region.

"He said we'd probably be shot," one of the young pilots narrated. "But what does the Old Man do when we tell him—I'm speaking of the general, you know—well, he shakes his head and he says, 'Poor France, what are you coming to!' Then he says all right, our case will be attended to later."

"I hear they shot a couple of guys at Damascus," another put in.

"You'll hear all sorts of things. I don't believe it. It's like the story about their bringing German pilots to fly our machines. Bunk."

"Bunk nothing," protested a third. "I know it's true. And you know how I know? I saw

some. Three days ago, at Homs. They wore French uniforms, but if they weren't Fritzes, I'm a monkey. And they could fly, too. You should have seen them tear those Curtisses around."

The truck halted suddenly. A mounted gendarme, an officer, appeared in back, pushed his head in, looked around as if seeking someone in particular.

"Tickets, tickets please," one of the young flyers piped.

Lorrain looked as casual as he could, assumed his most British expression. He could see Garcin, talking with the gendarme, with the pulse beating visibly on his neck, beating, beating. The truck snorted and started again.

Garcin caught Lorrain's glance, shook his head: The gendarme had been after other game. By now, the colonel's headquarters must have gone up in one of the heavier explosions they had heard and the body would never be examined. But both of them were haunted by the formidable silhouette of the cube-headed colonel, the man with the iron jaw.

The next incident was not so pleasant.

The chauffeur brought the truck to a stop,

leaped off and started to run. After a brief hesitation, the two guards followed. The next instant, the noncom, who had looked out and up, bounced to the ground, vanished, with the single warning cry, "Planes."

With the rattling and squealing of the old chassis, the churning of the worn motor, those inside had heard nothing. But now they heard the roar of planes, very near, and the shattering explosions of small bombs. A truck is a larger target than a man, so all dove out, scattered and ran as far from the road as possible. A lone anti-aircraft gun, mounted on a truck, was firing.

Lorrain threw himself flat on his face, trying to dig into the pebbly sand. The earth seemed to swell and push against his stomach, to refuse him shelter. The end of the world was hurtling upon him; he was deafened, his mouth full of sand. He looked to the side, saw a shallow crater, remembered that lightning seldom struck twice in the same place, crawled and slid



into it. He burned his palm on a bit of hot metal, the reek of explosives choked him.

One of the French flyers had joined him, crouched face up, arms hugging his bare knees. "Hurricanes—eh, that one has guts! I could have reached up and touched him—Oh-oh-oh—look at that!"

Lorrain was not curious and kept his face buried in his arms, his arms pressed on the ground. The back of his head felt as wide as a skating pool, and just as bare and glistening.

Those inside the truck now heard the roar of planes, very near, and the explosions of bombs.



He had left his helmet somewhere— He was tormented because he could not recall where. In the trench when first taken? In the office? In the cell?



THE British machines were back and raking the soil with machine-gun bullets. The air was filled with tracers.

"Ours!" yelled someone.

This time, Lorrain looked up. Three planes were coming, still high, a swift, menacing triangle. The British planes rose to meet them, then turned and made for the southwest. Lor-

rain wanted to cheer those machines with French markings, who had chased death away from him. Even if they were manned by Nazi pilots, for the moment they were his friends.

There were lorries burning on the road, and the trucks had to swing to one side to pass them. The confusion was indescribable. On the plain, the men who had scrambled to safety were stringing back to their machines. Further on, a battalion of Moroccan Infantry, headed for the front, was reforming. And there were groups of the inescapable mounted gendarmes, some French, some Syrian—three, four, five in one lot. Odd about military policemen: They seemed to vanish underground as if by magic during danger, and the moment it was over, there they were, herding others.

But they had a job now. The column of trucks was badly disorganized. Vehicles could be seen far off the main road, bumping along narrow lanes, rolling yet hesitant, as if peering over their hoods for threatening planes.

"Eh, there, looks like a painting," the aviator said. He indicated two batteries of field-artillery taking position behind a swell of ground.

They were horse-drawn, old-type seventy-fives, such as had stopped the Boches at the Marne in 1914, but still formidable weapons, especially when provided with the modern assortment of shells.

The noncom in charge of the truck appeared. "Want me to send you newspapers? Come on, come on—"

Prisoners and guards were gathered about the truck, but the chauffeur could not be found. Had he deserted, climbed aboard another truck, or was he lying somewhere, hit by a bomb fragment or one of those heavy bullets?

"The devil with him," the sergeant said at last. "We can't wait all day. Who can drive?" He selected one of the young aviators. "But no funny business; the guards don't kid."

Everyone climbed in again. The new chauffeur threw in his clutch. If anything, he was rougher than the first one, for he drove like an aviator, in three dimensions, and circled obstacles such as wreckage and craters without reducing speed.

Infantry units were deployed over the plain, preparing tank obstacles. Lorrain saw Moroccan, Algerian, Senegalese troopers, and an occasional group of French engineers. The men looked well-fed and trim enough. A broad-shouldered, tanned lieutenant of the French Colonial Infantry seated opposite Lorrain smiled sadly.

"The Army of Italy," he said.

"Where? These?" Lorrain asked.

"Weygand's dream. Seems long ago now, yet it's not much over a year. If and when Italy declared war on France, the Syrian Forces were to land in Sicily and Calabria, knock Italy out of the war before the Germans could assist her. But when Italy came in, the Boches had licked us. Weygand thought it could be done, and most of us believed him. The Italian's a rotten fighter."

"I'd say he was an uneven fighter," Lorrain corrected. "I served against Italians in Abyssinia and Eritrea. Some days the macaronis would fight like hell, and they'd cave in the next."

This brought on the usual argument about fighting worth in general and that of the Italians in particular. It was a rather incoherent discourse, as the participants had to clutch at the chassis and at each other every few seconds.

"I gather you were in Abyssinia," the Britisher next to Lorrain spoke up at the next lull. "What bunch?"

"Platt's. Foreign Legion."

"My name's Kenwigs. F.M.F. to Aduwa."

Lorrain knew much about the Flit Mobile Force, and it turned out the two had friends in common. Kenwigs did not break down and offer his hand, but he liked Lorrain much better. The young British flyer began to lose his reserve and before long, without seeming aware of the importance of his information—

possibly he had not understood the peculiar status of the French officers in the truck—he said that it was too bad that the lorry should be heading north, when by heading westward, they might come upon a British column on the coast.

"They were to land last night and probably did," he said. "Commandos and Aussies."

At the next hygienic pause, Lorrain transmitted the information to Garcin. The lieutenant borrowed the sergeant's map. It was a civilian map, small scale and inaccurate. Nevertheless, a trip west seemed possible. Garcin explained to the sergeant that he wanted to find a short cut away from the main road in case of another raid. Their truck and its cargo was not important militarily, he pointed out, and added to the clutter. By swinging west, they might come upon a road not so crowded as this one.

Garcin was an officer, wore arms. The sergeant did not argue at all. He picked his spot and time, swung the vehicle along a fairly good path, away from the procession. They rattled and bumped through a region of sandy, low hills. Mounted patrols, gendarmes and *spahis*, were encountered but they did not stop the car.

They rolled on, through miserable, dusty aggregations of mud huts clustered around the pumps of filling stations where squads of infantry stood guard. In one such cluster, a traffic officer appeared. Garcin alighted, then the others, glad of a chance to stretch their legs.

The traffic man was not suspicious. He was not a fool; it simply was hard for a man accustomed to consider the French uniform as a guarantee, to imagine anything was wrong with a truck containing about a score of Frenchmen and four unarmed Britishers.

"You want to swing wide here," he explained, comparing his staff map with the road map used by Garcin and marking the spots with red pencil. "English patrols reported. They landed somewhere to the south last night. The Lemoine Group from Saida'll handle them. They have no heavy artillery as yet, according to the reports, but their small stuff is well handled. They have destroyers off the coast, too, and those can really shoot."



THEY covered another twenty-five or thirty kilometers, came to another mud pile centered by a red pump. Here they were halted and questioned more closely. Their presence in the region had probably been reported. An incurious, stolid officer of Algerians shrugged, waved his hand.

"You're supposed to go back to the main road, that's all I know. If you want to wait here until I get further orders—"

Garcin did not want to wait. The truck barked, turned and retraced its way to a cross-

road well out of sight. There, the lieutenant called a stop.

While there had been no real conference among the prisoners, all had gathered what was happening. The sergeant and his three guards were disarmed without fuss. The escaping party was then armed with one automatic rifle, three carbines and two pistols. Garcin offered command to the lieutenant of Colonials, his senior in age and promotion. The man politely declined.

"I'm not in charge unless we're recaptured," he said.

It was the proper thing properly expressed, and all were very pleased. The Syrian soldiers, as soon as they knew that there would be no slicing of throats, asked questions about pay and food in the British service. And before the truck had rolled a hundred yards in the forbidden direction, the sergeant had confessed strong pro Gaullist feelings.

To circle the village, the truck had to take rough trails. There were stretches where the rate of progress was under five miles an hour, long weavings between boulders, skirting scarps and pebbly slopes; then long slides down hill, the truck swaying from side to side, the chauffeur yelping and the aviators cheering. All expected to see the point scout of a British task force almost any moment.

Then, brutally, reality smote them in the face. They hurtled over a sort of viaduct only a few yards in length, and a dusky, helmeted sentry, distinctly French Senegalese, stood in the road with such resolution that the chauffeur braked to avoid knocking him down. He yelled shrilly, "*A la garde, à la garde!*"

The chauffeur argued with him, Garcin argued with him. But the black eyes remained steady, the scarred face expressionless, and the same monotonous shrilling issued from between the thick, purplish lips. He was still shouting when two men who had dropped out of the back and circled the machine disarmed him. He did not try to use his bayonet, but he did not shut up.

"Corporal—the guard! Corporal—the guard!"

The corporal suddenly materialized, from somewhere in the shade under the little bridge. His voice was heard first, then his head showed, crested by a steel helmet under that broiling sun.

"All right, Konate, coming, all right—"

He caught sight of the armed group, saw Private Konate held securely by dusty, grim strangers. The corporal was a mulatto, tall and lean. He took stock of the situation, dropped his rifle, but instead of coming forward, he ducked back under the viaduct, vanished for three seconds, and was then seen galloping into the open on the other side, a long, khaki blur two paces ahead of his shadow.

"Shoot him," called one of the Syrians.

The armed men hesitated, and each second,



There were Moroccan, Algerian and Senegalese troopers deployed over the plain.

the corporal added yards to the range. At the cry, he started to dodge right and left, plunged here, plunged there, bobbed up, until those watching him could not have shot from laughing.

"Let him go," Garcin said, at last. He indicated the empty plain. "Where the hell can he get to?"

They climbed into the truck again, wearily. The Negro ran after them. "My rifle—my rifle—court-martial—"

"True," one of the youngsters said. "They'll punish him for losing his gun—"

"Throw it to him—"

The chap who had the long Lebel tossed it out, not on the road but on a drift of sand. "All right, all right, don't cry! Here it is."

From the crest of the next ridge, those looking back saw the black man tenderly examining his piece. They felt noble, somehow, that they had not harmed the poor dumb fellow nor caused him trouble with his chiefs. The one dissenter was a Syrian, who, having thrown in his lot with the party, felt they had all been rash.

"One should shoot, one should always shoot."

He had a simple mind, and did not stop to think that according to his principle, he would have been dead for more than an hour. But he was right, thrice right.

Less than an hour later, a twirl of dust spun

toward them from the rear. Very soon, it was reported by those with keen eyes as an armored car, a light, open-top turret job, equipped with one heavy and one light machine gun.

When still more than a mile away, flames blinked from the front, a summons to halt. It would have been useless to keep on—a percheron horse trying to beat a light cavalry mount. The Syrian leaped out, and started to run, quite as fast as had the corporal. The turret of the armored machine swung, flashed, sputtered short bursts—and the Syrian pitched headlong to the ground. The gunner was careful—those in the truck saw the impacts of bullets kicking up dust to the body once, twice, three times.

Two hundred yards away, the car halted, turret again bearing. A helmeted head, a torso emerged slowly. The man—an officer, from the scintillation of his cuffs—gesticulated with one hand, very plainly: "Everybody out—line up beside the road!"

CHAPTER V

"TOWARD THE SOUND OF CANNON"



THEY complied. It was no use trying to fight those three men behind steel plates that deflected rifle bullets. Another gesture: "Drop your weapons." This was obeyed. More gesturing: "Turn the truck around. . ."

White-faced, the young chauffeur climbed behind the wheel, maneuvered, backed, swung until he faced the armored machine. The officer gestured again: "Come forward slowly, slowly," and the truck crept forward slowly, up to the machine, beyond it, fifty yards, a hundred, two hundred.

More gestures: The men were to get on the road and walk to the truck. Lorrain fell in line with the rest. The sun beat down, and he was thirsty. But there were two metal kegs in the truck. He tried not to think further than the truck, and that drink. Not to think of court-martial, of another meeting with Huguenain. It had been a mad venture from the start, he now realized. They could not make it through territory watched by an army—not with field-telephones and radio messages!

The armored car was creeping to meet them, the turret swinging, swinging. It passed them. A quick decision, now a scramble and—but the car was gone, down the road. It halted where they had halted, a door open. A single man emerged, gathered the weapons, which he handed to someone inside.

In its turn, the armored car backed, swung about, the turret swinging with it, the machine gun bearing on the prisoners. The chief gestured again: "Walk on, walk on to the truck."

The prisoners plodded on. No one said a word. One of the Britishers was whistling.

Unconsciously, men skipped to get in step. Then the machine gun slapped out, bullets hit the road, ricocheted, hit flesh. Men tumbled, scrambled on all fours, went down again.

Lorrain, with more recent combat experience, acted more quickly than the others. He left the road, leaped four or five times, dove flat on his face. The murderous bastards were machine-gunning unarmed men, after accepting their surrender! The murderous—

Tatatatatata . . . tatata . . . ta . . . tatatatata!

The survivors had scattered, and the machine gun swung in a wide arc. The light gun covered the road, struck the bodies lying there again and again.

Lorrain rolled to better cover. One did not need much, not much—six, seven inches of earth. He had found his place, he hoped. He did not know if part of his back, part of his legs, showed. He must not move—movement attracts attention. Those murderers up there had twenty targets to watch; they might miss one.

Tatata—tata! Tatatatata—someone was running—tatata!

By contrast, the lighter machine gun seemed to go *tocktocktick—tocktocktick—*

Murder. The British prisoners at least should have been safeguarded by international agreement. But they had shared in an escape, helped to commit violence on guards. Legally, the swine were within their rights. French swine, for that officer was French. And who would ever bother, later, to find out who had done what on an isolated by-path in Syria?

The machine guns ceased firing. There was the easy, smooth chugging of the motor. Then more shots, well-spaced, deliberate shots: *Tack-o . . . tack-o!* At first, Lorrain did not understand. Then he felt a blow near the hip. Three seconds later, a missile struck inches from his head.

He knew then: Someone was standing up in that car, with a carbine, and making sure each exposed body had been attended to. But he must not move. The next shot might blow in the back of his skull or smash his spine. That was the chance to take.

Tack-o . . . tack-o. He did not hear the impacts. The fellow had passed him up for dead. The shots grew fewer, ceased at last. After long minutes, Lorrain heard steps along the road, voices. Quite near, not a hundred feet away. Casual words, then someone laughing nervously. More steps. After a long interval there was the churning of the truck's old motor, the metallic slamming of a door, and the purring of the armored car's motor.

Then silence, long silence—a silence filled with small whisperings and rustlings: the air moving through bushes, insects creeping. Lorrain's mind was filled with suspicion—suspicion that the car had left a man standing there, carbine in hand, waiting for the corpses to move.



Lorrain could see two riders silhouetted against the sky, motionless, with the rigid lines of carbines across their saddles.

The Englishman saw him, nodded. He opened his mouth to speak, gestured helplessly with one hand, said nothing. For a moment they stared at each other, then Lorrain stood up. Blood was soaking his clothing from the hip down on his right side, but he felt no serious pain, walked easily.

He limped to the road and Kenwigs handed him a cigarette. Then, almost without exchanging words, they applied a bandage to Lorrain's wound, a searing gash two inches long and a quarter of an inch deep. They did this on the open road, yet they often looked in the direction the armored car had gone, and the snap of fingers would have sent them to cover.

"Hit?" Lorrain asked, and the other shook his head. "Where were you?"

"There, on the road." The Englishman indicated a row of four corpses. Then suddenly he started to speak, all in a rush. "That chap"—he indicated the Colonial infantry lieutenant—"he was just behind me and when the shooting started he pushed me down—purposely or not, I wouldn't know—and I stayed there." He caught his breath and went on slowly, "Knew it wouldn't do to move. That machine came to a stop right near me, and the officer fellow was popping away in great style. Cruel bugger, you know."

If he lifted his head, moved his legs, he would die.

The sun was moving and its light was striking his right eye, burning into it through the lid, burning his ear and cheek. The sun was trying to make him move. If he shifted his right arm just a bit, his eye would be protected. But movement—

At last, he could bear it no longer. His right leg throbbed. He sat up briskly. Nothing happened. He turned his head to the road and he saw Kenwigs standing there, alive, seemingly unhurt, smoking a cigarette and looking about.



HE LOOKED about stolidly, started to walk. Lorrain tagged along. After a short search, they found the youngest Englishman. He was dead. Kenwigs took his identification, cigarettes and three tablets of chocolate from him.

"We'll need the map," he said.

"Garcin—that's the lieutenant—had it. He was walking in the lead. Around here—"

They left the road, located one body, a second, a third. The fourth was Garcin. He had covered more than a hundred yards. One of his thighs was shredded, his shoulder was a mess. Lorrain found the map in his tunic pocket. The heavy paper was limp with blood. He unfolded it carefully to avoid smearing the printed surface and laid it out in the sun to dry.

"He's alive," Kenwigs remarked. He went to find a dressing.

"What's the use?" Lorrain asked wearily. "We can't stay with him and he can't walk. We can't even give him a drink."

"Right thing to do, though," Kenwigs said seriously.

The blood started to flow again when they moved Garcin, soaked through the bandages. Once his eyes opened, but he evidently did not see them. Nevertheless, they placed his head in a shady spot and straightened his wounded leg—as if that could make him comfortable. Lorrain's head jerked up.

"Horses!"

Kenwigs tensed, held up one hand, as if he could feel the sounds with his fingers. Then he nodded. "Horses."

Horses in this region meant a French cavalry patrol. The British would not have mounted troops. Lorrain folded the map, stiff now with the sticky, drying blood. Then they trotted toward the top of the nearest hill, away from the road. They stopped on the crest, lay down flat. The clumping of horses came nearer and nearer. Two horsemen appeared well in the lead, then five in a group, then twenty-five or thirty riding two abreast.

"Moroccans," Lorrain whispered.

They raced down the opposite slope, found a shallow, dry gully. They crawled along this for a while. Lorrain saw some damp sand and scraped away at it with his fingers to the moist silt beneath. They took turns squeezing water out of the mud into each other's palms through a piece of shirt. It was not much good, but it was moisture. They tried to talk, but broke off in the middle of sentences, as if they could not think things through for long.

After some time, Lorrain crept up the slope. He saw two riders on a crest, silhouetted against the sky, motionless, with the rigid lines of carbines across their saddles. He told Kenwigs, who joined him. For some time, the riders remained. Then they seemed to melt into space.

"They were looking at us," Kenwigs said.

"It always seems that way. But they may come back, so we'd better stay under cover a while."

"Until night," Kenwigs agreed.

They found shade in the lee of the embankment. Lorrain dreaded the long wait. His hip

throbbed, his tongue rasped in his mouth. Yet he fell asleep.

He was dreaming that he was carrying a basket of eggs up a carpeted stairway. He knew the stairs—they led to the ballroom of the prefecture building in a small garrison town where he had served. Someone threw an egg at him, he let go of the basket, and the eggs bounced on the risers. They did not break. He had been mistaken; they were not eggs, they were billiard balls, and they made an odd, cascading, muffled sound.

He woke up, and knew where he was instantly. It was night and the moon was high. His companion, three feet away, still snored, loudly enough to have attracted attention from anyone passing within twenty yards. The sky rumbled, the billiard balls hopped down the stairs again: cannon fire, miles away.

He reached out, touched Kenwigs, who sat up at once, stretched and yawned. Then the Englishman lighted a cigarette, shading the lighter in his palms.

"D'you know that American beer in tins?" he asked.

"Yes."

"A tin would be lovely now. However—let's see if we can squeeze out a bracing drop of juice."

When it came to walking, Lorrain found his right leg very stiff and painful. Kenwigs did the navigating, headed south and west. The firing must be quite distant, Lorrain thought, as he could see no flashes.

"No machine guns, no small arms," Kenwigs commented, after a while. "Artillery. Fairly big stuff, too. Well, wasn't it Napoleon's general order to head for the sound of cannon?"

Lorrain pulled on the bandage to ease the chafing, and felt the warm trickle of blood down his thigh. He said nothing—what could Kenwigs do about it? Their shadows danced on the sand, on boulders, huge and distorted, vaguely comical. Time passed.

"I know," Kenwigs said suddenly. "I know why there's only cannon. Simple: ships bombarding the coast. We must be near the sea. The sea is east—west, somewhere. I say, what's your name?"

"Jean Lorrain."

"Mine's Kenwigs."

"Not my real name," Lorrain went on. "I have a family in France. Occupied Zone. But my mother comes from Lorraine."

They walked on, the moon swam across the clear sky. They stopped from time to time to investigate patches of light that glistened like water. The time did not seem long; Lorrain no longer felt fatigue. He had been marching since he could remember and he could march forever. They would reach a crest, look down into a wide valley, walk on.

At last, they stopped and sat down to rest. The sand was soft and inviting. They talked

a while of this and that, cozily, then sank back.

Then, without transition, it was daylight. There were people all about, a swarm of heavy boots and bare knees. They talked loudly, cheerfully. One of them squatted near Lorrain. He was bare-headed, red-haired, with a snub nose and a lot of freckles.

"This one's waking up, sir," he was saying. "Come on, you've had your nap. Good lad—"

He was about nineteen, had two teeth missing in his upper jaw. Tobacco-stained spittle streaked his dusty chin. He had no wings, but he had something much better: a water-bottle.

* * * * *

CHAPTER VI

THE ORAN UNDERGROUND



WHEN Lorrain arrived in Oran, more than two years later, the Syrian episode was a very dim memory.

Like most soldiers, he lived in the present, did not engage in retrospection or worry about the future. And so many things had happened since then. He had been through the hell of Bir Hacheim, where the Fighting French Brigade had checked Rommel's crack troops for several days, and he had been in the victorious sweep westward that had taken the British Eighth Army from the gates of Alexandria to those of Tunis.

Since then, Captain Crawford, liberated by the Franco-British conquest of Syria, had been killed in Libya. Sergeant William Knight, who had escaped capture by the French in Syria and by the Germans in Tobruk, had been taken by the Japanese, with thousands of other Australians helpless aboard transports in Singapore. Kenwigs was a major and if alive, somewhere at the foot of Mount Etna.

Lorrain had left the First Fighting French Group, part of the British Eighth Army, for two reasons: The second because no one was sure what would be done with the Group under the National Liberation Government; the first, a flesh wound through the shoulder which had kept him in the hospital six weeks. He had become a captain, had added to the War Cross won in December 1939, the Colonial Cross won in 1937, a brace of British awards and the Gaullists' Order of Liberation.

On the evening of his second day in Oran, in the lobby of the Hotel Imperia, a thin, stooped man came to meet him. He wore a shabby suit too large for his frame, his shoes were scuffed, his tie stringy.

"Hello, Lorrain. I'm Etienne Garcin."

"Garcin, Garcin?" Lorrain repeated.

"We met in Syria."

"Yes, of course—" Lorrain suddenly remembered, clasped the man's hand, put an arm

over his shoulders. "Garcin, of course! I just didn't—I thought—"

"You thought I was dead. I thought you were, for the last two years," Garcin laughed. "In fact, until yesterday. You came in on the same train as a friend of mine, you got to talking. He remembered your name because he's from Lorraine. I started to look you up, and found you registered here."

They went into the bar, selected a corner, drank and smoked.

"No, I don't know who picked me up," Garcin narrated after listening to Lorrain's tale of escape. "Last I remember, I was running like a hare. Next, I was in a hospital somewhere, probably at Saida. All the people there could tell me was that I'd been brought in with a lot of others one night, and that they'd thought I'd lost too much blood to survive."

"When I was convalescent, in Beyrouth, noth-

"You thought I was dead, didn't you?" said the stooped man in the shabby suit.



ing was said about charges against me. In March 1942, I was declared unfit for army service. Bum leg. I was shipped to France under some agreement with the Boches. I found nothing to do there, except industrial labor for them. One of my sisters married here and I came. Her husband repairs furniture, antiques. So I help him." He exhibited calloused hands. "We're doing carpentry for the Americans just now. It's honest work."

"Gosh, I am glad to see you," Lorrain repeated often. He was sincere. He had known Garcin less than twenty-four hours, but under circumstances that made friendship flourish fast.

"Know who's in town?" Garcin asked quietly.

"No, who? Anyone I know?"

"Slightly! Huguenain."

Lorrain started. "No kidding. You reported him?"

"Reported him?" Garcin laughed bitterly. "The slob! I first saw him in April, when he was on his way to Algiers. I investigated. He's not hiding, he's still in the Army, in good standing. In fact, he's under-secretary for something-or-other in the Liberation Government. He was on some sort of mission in Central America for Vichy when the Americans landed. His direct chief in Algeria had him on his staff in conferences with German commissions dealing with labor and food supplies, and asked for him.

"I went to see people and told them what he had done." Garcin looked at his cigarette for a long moment in silence, shrugged. "Doesn't seem to shock them. They say he was on the other side in Syria, like a lot of people, and doing his job. If he had shot a British prisoner, it might be different. But we were rebels, and I was told to look up regulations concerning the initiative permitted an officer when faced by insubordination in a combat emergency. Even if I could prove everything, they told me, all he'd have to do would be to evoke his orders, his mission, and pass the blame higher up.

"When I insisted, I was warned to keep my mouth shut and avoid trouble. I'd kill him—" The thin young man touched his withered thigh. "Pretty well mashed up, nothing much to live for. But it's too easy, too easy—and they'd probably soak me with eight years' hard labor. Death I could take, but Guiana, no. But I'll get square. You hate him, and you didn't know the guys he killed. One of them, Vial, was the nicest guy I ever knew."

"What are you going to do?"

"I have an idea. I'll need your help. Huguenain's son is here—"

Garcin broke off, to be introduced to Lieutenant Ferrand, with whom Lorrain shared a room in the hotel. It took some time for Lorrain to bring them to friendly trust of each other. Both had lived in Oran during the

Vichy regime and knew the value of silence. Ferrand had served six months in military prison in 1941 for having tried to join the Gaullists.

"And some of the guys who hung that stretch on me are around," he explained when the ice was broken. "Rallied to Liberation, washed clean and I have to salute them. True, if you started to card out all the birds who worked for Laval until November 1942, and collaborated with the Boches, you'd have a job. If elections mean anything, this town was fascist even before the war. I don't see what you can do about that bird, Huguenain, but I'll help if I can."

Garcin shook his head. "No. Lorrain was in on it, that's different. Listen, can you two come to dinner at a friend of mine's tomorrow night? Plenty to eat, special occasion, somebody knows Americans."

Both accepted.

Shortly before noon the next day, Lorrain saw Colonel Huguenain. He was seated on a cafe terrace, reading a newspaper. He wore a soft brown hat, a dark civilian suit, heavy, highly polished black shoes. Like many officers in mufti, he looked like a prosperous farmer in town clothes. His tie was too loud, his collar too white, and despite the rosette of the Legion of Honor on his jacket, he seemed shrunken, less formidable.

Then Huguenain looked up, glanced about casually, did not notice Lorrain. But the young man felt the impact of that remembered glance. The scene in the yard flashed in his mind and he wanted to run, yet he wanted to kill. He hated that man with an intensity that startled him. And the impulse flashed through his brain to shoot him then and there. But, as Garcin had decided before him, that would be foolish; easy, too easy.



THE dinner was at a villa close to the airport, in the suburbs. For North Africa of the period, it was superb. The guests were all men, and with the exception of Garcin and the host, a retired cavalry major, all were in uniform. Lorrain wondered at first why Garcin had brought him, then he became absorbed by the food, the wine and the conversation. After the meal, tongues loosened, groups formed.

"Give us the song, Rémy," someone shouted.

"Are there ladies within hearing?" A very young, stocky lieutenant of aviation rose near the foot of the table. He wore French insignia on a uniform of unmistakably British cut, showed several British ribbons. When the host assured him he could go ahead, he sang, in a fair tenor voice. The song was a parody on a popular French ballad, *My Legionnaire*, but the words substituted could not be found in most dictionaries. The lad had a fine feeling for

burlesque, in contrast with his rather serious, square face and the brush of stiff black hair cresting his sloping forehead.

Lorrain had the impression that he had seen him somewhere before. But when he had left France, that fellow could not have been more than sixteen. The boy repeated the song twice, sank down, mopping his face.

"Won't be as much fun as this tomorrow," he remarked to his neighbors. "Dinner with my old man and his pals. Yes, I got the paternal forgiveness, and as soon as there is a calf available, it will be put to pasture. Would be fine if I liked veal."

The host informed Lorrain that the lad had a fantastic story: His father had been rallied to the Vichyites, but he had run away from a school in Normandy in the spring of 1941, had contrived to cross the Channel in a light canoe, and had served in England with the Fighting French Air Corps. Lorrain suddenly understood why the young chap appeared so familiar—of course, he was Huguenain's son!

Garcin took him aside later, led him into a sort of pantry, from which they could see the hallway under the stairs. Young Rémy was there, dancing with a serving maid. She was a Neo, an Oranese Spaniard, short and shapely, ankles trim in black cotton stockings. Her dark eyes flashed from a pretty, heart-shaped face framed by black tresses.

When they saw Lorrain and Garcin, the girl wanted to run. The aviator caught her, laughed, whispered in her ear—meanwhile smiling and winking at the watching men. Probably he was assuring her that they would not inform her mistress. There was so much youthful comradeship, so much trust in his swift smile that Lorrain grew uneasy.

"I hope you won't hurt the boy," he said. "He seems decent, and he's been on the right side."

"I've been on the right side, too, and look at me." Garcin's tone held bitter irony. "I went to the trouble of getting him here to meet the girl—I have a purpose. He's a noisy fool and a show-off, but I realize he's not to blame for his old man. He won't be hurt if it can be avoided."

"What have you got in mind, anyway?" Lorrain challenged.

"Your showing up, his son showing up, gave me a good idea—reminded me there was someone else who might show up. Oh, I have a scheme, don't worry, and I have some friends to help. Don't forget that this city was under Vichy for more than two years, that the Gauls had an underground system. They don't like to see the guys who shifted only when the shifting was safest sprawling in all the good jobs."

"Better be careful, Garcin."

"If you want to keep out of it altogether, Lorrain, it's all right with me." Garcin smiled with easy tolerance. "You're a whole man, you

have a career to further, so forgiveness may be wiser."

Lorrain reflected for two seconds.

"No," he concluded, "I'm in this with you."

The following morning, two men came to Lorrain's room at the Imperia. They were obviously samples of plainclothes police. They suggested that Lorrain should accompany them to the prefecture to straighten a minor matter of identification. He was about to follow them when his roommate, Ferrand, came in. He asked for a convocation paper, a warrant of

They saw Rémy in the hallway dancing with a pretty Neo serving maid.



some sort with Lorrain's name on it, which they could not produce. Then he ordered them out.

"Think it was a trick?" Lorrain asked.

"Sure of it. That's how a number of people dropped out of sight. You see, if they have a paper with your name, there's an entry in the registers somewhere. If not, they can lose you, make a 'mistake.' You might find yourself working in some labor gang in the Sahara, listed as a Spaniard or something of the sort. In six or seven months, you might establish your real identity, and everyone would be so sorry."

The two cops did not reappear with a warrant, which proved that everything had not been on the level. And suspicion was confirmed when Garcin showed up the following morning, looking thinner, more stooped than ever, bruises on his face and abrasions on his wrists. He accepted a glass of brandy and a cigarette, talked nervously.

"I'm going home and get some sleep," he announced. "They've been at me since yesterday before noon. They tried first without a warrant and came again with one when I wouldn't go without. They trundled me to the prefecture, where no one seemed to know what it was all about, then took me to a small station. They kept me all day without food or water, without a chance to leave my cell. My friends showed up this morning, after contacting the right people in Algiers, and got me freed. The official charge against me is carrying prohibited weapons, because I have a revolver. Me, a former officer! To make my detention look legal, I'll have to pay a fine of two hundred francs."

"Now, it means just this: Huguenain is trying to keep us quiet. He's probably been told that I tried to get him in trouble and has had his friends watch me. You're spotted, too. He knows we cannot do much legally, but he knows also that we might make enough of a stink so that the Gaullists in the Liberation Government would yell for his dismissal from office."

"If we want to do something about him, we must move before he does. He won't be here for more than three days, as his kid's going to Tunis for incorporation into the Air Army, and they'll probably ride together as far as Algiers. We'll get hold of Huguenain tonight and court-martial him. No rough stuff, all aboveboard. Will you testify in person, send a statement, or stay out altogether?"

"I'll stick. I'll be there."

"You may be tailed. Here's how to come—" Garcin outlined the plan.



TOWARD the close of the dinner that night, Lorrain left his comrades at the table, leaving his kepi hanging on its hook beside the others. He left the building through a ventilation window of the washroom, put on

a cloth fatigue cap. A civilian met him outside, led the way through dark streets, narrow alleys, across courtyards. Then they entered a tall tenement building from the rear, climbed dark stairs. Garcin greeted him on a landing.

"Should be here in an hour."

"With cops or without?"

"Who knows?" Garcin led the way to the end of the hall, indicated a curtain screening the glass pane of a door. "It's dark here, they can't see. You'll understand."

A strange group was gathered around a table, under a suspension lamp. There was young Rémy, looking angry and bored rather than frightened. Opposite him, wiping her tear-filled eyes, sat Maria, the young Neo girl, in a cheap evening dress. A flat-chested, swarthy woman, probably her mother, was at her side, looking scared and wiping tears. A lean, middle-aged man wearing blue dungarees, shod in sandals, was reading a newspaper. As Lorrain watched, he looked up, pushed a bottle of wine nearer to the officer, who smiled, shrugged and poured himself a drink.

Garcin touched Lorrain on the arm, led him away. "You understand?"

"In general, yes."

"Rémy's been meeting the girl. Her folks live here. We spoke to her father and he consented to get offended, for two hundred and fifty francs. The girl comes home to change into that dress, Rémy meets her in the yard. The father comes up, starts a row. The neighbors pop out. Nothing to it except for Rémy to come upstairs to argue in private. He can't smack the old man because he likes the girl."

"Well, the father tells him the girl is not seventeen and that he'll make charges. Rémy says all right, that he is in the clear. Mother and girl weep, they don't want the cops called because of the scandal. The father says he doesn't mind his daughter being out with someone reliable, but the town's full of transient soldiers. If somebody guarantees that Rémy is of good family, can be located if and when, you know, it's all right with him. Otherwise, there will be trouble."

"So he agrees to send for his father. He writes a note. That kid's no dummy. He explains that the situation seems pre-arranged, that the girl's not in on it, and that a thousand francs would help, he thinks. He says not to bother about him, that he is ducking the cops only because he fears to hurt his father's prestige."

"Will Huguenain come?"

"I think so. He's a bourgeois Frenchman, and doesn't want his son tangled up with a Neo girl. Might crop up some time and spoil some good marriage for him."

"If he lives," Lorrain commented.

"Captain Lorrain," Garcin announced as they entered a room.

A number of men were there, seated away

from the strong light. They nodded, did not come forward. They seemed settled, middle-aged citizens. All, however, wore decoration and campaign ribbons on their jackets, were veterans of World War I. They went on chatting in low voices, smoked. The air was opaque and warm.

"Gaullists from the start," Garcin informed Lorrain. "Some of them gambled their lives, all of them their freedom. Things are better today, but the fight goes on."

The room was large, evidently a workshop. From the benches, the lathes, the furnace, Lorrain thought it might be a repair-shop for typewriters, hunting guns, phonographs, sewing machines and such things. Black curtains were fastened over the windows, but from the fact that much of the way here had led down hill, Lorrain had a good idea that he was in a street of the Old Town, overlooking the harbor.

"He's on the way," a young soldier said, from the door.

"Everything as expected?"

"Yes. He was finishing dinner when the waiter handed him the note. The waiter says he read it, excused himself, took his kepi and belt from the wall and started right out, following the messenger."

"All right," Garcin nodded. "As soon as he is in this room, you go up and tell them to let the kid go. . . . What? Oh, just tell him that his father couldn't come but agreed to have the girl's father call on him later—anything." Garcin stood up, limped to the shaded lamp, set it over a chair. "You fellows know what to do. No rough stuff."

Ten minutes later, they heard quick, firm steps outside. The door opened. Colonel Huguenain entered.

CHAPTER VII

COLONEL HUGUENAIN'S TRIAL



HE had evidently been called away from a semi-official dinner, for he was in uniform, with five rows of multicolored ribbons barring his left breast. He looked around, his face calm, then smiled.

"I see." He half-turned, handed his kepi and stick to a man who had slipped behind him to lean against the door. "That's all. I am not armed."

"Make sure," Garcin said.

"By all means." Huguenain raised his arms as the man patted his pockets. "All right? I suppose this is meant for me." He walked across the room to the isolated chair under the light, sat down. "May I ask a question?"

"Yes."

"Your business being with me, will Lieutenant Huguenain be released?"

"In due time, in due time."



Leaving his kepi hanging on a hook in the restaurant, Lorrain left the building through the washroom window.

"Good." Huguenain looked at the smoke swirling under the light. "May I share in the smoking? Thank you." He lighted a cigarette, put the match out. "I'm at your disposal, my friends."

"You don't need to be so cocky," one of the civilians said. "We mean business."

"I know it very well." Huguenain crossed one leg over the other. "I understand that I am in danger. I am a sane man, and do not wish to defy you. I confess that I am worried, if that is what you wish." He indicated Garcin, then Lorrain. "To cut matters short, I know what this is about. I admit knowing the two gentlemen. I know they want to settle with me for having given them a very bad case of funk. I hasten to add that I don't blame them."

"Huguenain, you're here to listen."

"I am listening."

"Proceed," Garcin called.

One of the others stepped forward, read off a rather long statement, concerning the shootings at the Syrian outpost, the massacre on the road.

"We will now hear Lieutenant Garcin—"

Huguenain lifted his hand. "I admit everything, so why bring testimony? Tedious, repetitious." He smoked on between sentences. "I'll even admit that the tragedy on the road happened according to my orders. I gave strict instructions not to take a chance on anyone

escaping, even for ten minutes, knowing how difficult it would be for a patrol officer to single out the two or three men it was important to dispose of for national security."

"Your defense is that the men were dangerous?"

"Not in themselves, but through circumstances. The gentleman over there"—he indicated Lorrain—"had been through our lines and had knowledge important to the enemy. He also knew that I had obtained the names of several chaps working for the British. One of the Britishers, a flyer, had information also, of a kind that would have helped.

"It was early in June, long before the issue in Syria was decided, and my mission was to protect the territory from invasion. Twenty-odd men killed on a road might save us four or five hundred casualties in the next twenty-four hours, the loss of some ground. It's war economy, gentlemen. Those immediately concerned in that bloody business found it pretty bitter, but once a war is admitted and a man is in uniform, he must expect consequences. It really doesn't matter where or how one falls. For instance"—he tapped his chest—"if you have the courage of your convictions and kill me tonight, it will be the same as if a German shell had killed me in France, a British bullet in Syria, a bomb in Algiers."

"You like to talk," a man commented.

"Rather, and my time's limited."

"You were a fascist, then a Nazi, pro-Boche—"

"I served France. The future will prove when I was right, when wrong." He gestured smartly. "You reproach me with talking a lot, and then coax me into a political discussion!"

"You have nothing else to add in your defense?"

"You stated your facts, I admit them."

Garcin and the civilians stood up and gathered in a corner. They argued in low voices. The colonel beckoned to Lorrain.

"I've been informed of your real name," he said in a casual tone. "I served under an uncle of yours, in 1913, in the Wadai. I hear he is a Pétainist these days. Sad mess, eh? And this is only the beginning." He chatted for a while, the only sign of nervousness a spasmodic clenching of his left hand. He looked up at Garcin when he returned. "Well?"

"We're not hangmen, Huguenain. We have a proposition."

"Bah! Whom must I betray now?"

"We consider you guilty of murder. We can call in your son, tell him of your actions in Syria. We will do so, unless you agree to spare us the trouble of shooting you."

"Eh? By shooting myself, I presume?" Huguenain laughed sincerely. "Is that the best you can think of?"

"Your son has been loyal to France. If he is told that while he was shooting Germans, you

were murdering unarmed Frenchmen, he—"

"My son is a boy of nineteen." Huguenain shrugged. "I understood his impulsive act and forgave him for not consulting me. But reversing roles, begging for his good opinion and approval—that is ridiculous. I'm against suicide for ethical and esthetic reasons." His glance challenged Garcin. "Come, my friend, I have shown you how it is done. Don't be lazy."

"If you compel us to act, your son shall be informed of your fate and of the reasons for it."

"That will be his problem."

"You do not see that it would be better—"

"Come, this is getting better," Huguenain said. "People who talk beyond a certain point seldom shoot. You passed the right moment a few seconds ago. A light, Captain Lorrain? Thank you . . . I shot three men with my own hand; I believed I was right then, I believe I was right now. If there had been a little selective shooting in France between 1936 and 1940, Germany would not have licked us.

"Between September 1939 and May 1940, a little selective shooting of loafing workers and saboteurs might have changed production. We were too soft. When possible, selective shooting is the thing. Suppose the Germans had been able to select one thousand Russians, instead of the million they've shot, their campaign would be won—"



LORRAIN realized now that Huguenain was not talking for the sheer pleasure of it. He was talking himself out of danger, gaining time, as he sensed the reluctance of those around him to kill him in cold blood. And, far from excusing himself, he was boasting.

He noted that Garcin was smiling, a curious, ironic smile, as if he thought that Huguenain was making a fool of himself.

"You prefer that your son be informed?" he asked.

"My dear friend, I'm not ashamed at all."

"You would sign a confession?"

"If you mean a statement, yes. The word 'confession' implies an admission of guilt."

"With date, names, witnesses?"

"Oh, I see—" Huguenain smiled crookedly. "It's my position you're after? Very well. I am ready to admit that I'd sooner lose it than my life."

"And a further condition, Colonel Huguenain: You agree, upon your honor, not to report or identify anyone present here? Not to cause their arrest or prosecution under any pretext, by anyone?"

"What good would it do me?" Huguenain shrugged. "You have my word that I shall not identify anyone and that, once safe in my room, I shall try to forget all about this episode." He picked up a pen and paper from a small table placed before him. "You dictate—or do you prefer me to compose?"



The plank fell into the yard before Garcin could cross. A man's voice cried, "I see them—here, here!"

"Write it yourself, Colonel," Garcin said. "I'll help you with the dates and names—"

"Oh, I have an excellent memory, my friend. I need no help." He dated the first sheet, and said aloud as the pen traced the words, "The undersigned, Huguenain, Jules-Rémy, Colonel with Staff Brevet—at present attached *hors cadres* to the cabinet of—" He looked up. "You insist upon these particulars?"

"Most certainly, Colonel," Garcin declared lightly. "And at that, you are getting a bargain."

"I'm not the one to deplore that." Huguenain wrote faster and faster, in terse, clear sentences. He hesitated only once. "I cannot locate the spot where you people were stopped and shot



at. I don't believe I ever knew exactly. Do you know?"

"No. That isn't important," Garcin replied after consulting Lorrain with a glance. "You have written, 'And acting on my direct and definite orders, the motorized patrol overtook the truck at—' Just add, '—a spot some kilometers down the road.'"

"I detest vagueness, but this isn't an official document," Huguenain commented. "Do I write that I made this statement of my free will? No? Well—" He signed, repeated his exact title under his name. Garcin read it over in a low voice, added two lines to state that the first two witnesses testified both to facts and signature, signed. Lorrain followed, then the others.

"That's all," Garcin said.

"Well?" Huguenain stood up.

"You are free."

Huguenain took his kepi and his stick. "Stairs to the right, two flights, left turn for the door, if I remember correctly?" He opened the door into the dark hall, turned. "Everything is all right. Good night, gentlemen."

He shut the door, his firm steps dwindled away.

"He knew he would not be harmed," one of the men declared. "From the start."

Garcin held up his hand. "Looked that way. But we have what I wanted, and he has guessed its purpose. Now to get out quietly. They're in the house. It's for them he said everything was all right. Wanted to get clear—"

"Who? What—" Lorrain asked.

"Fascist Youth thugs, probably." Garcin lifted an iron bar, swung it across the door. "There are eight of us. We'll leave two minutes apart. That's about fifteen minutes. I think they'll be patient that long. Sure there is no trouble in the back?"

"I was watching," one of the men replied, indicating what resembled an electric buzzer deprived of its gong, seemingly forgotten on a bench. "That thing would have moved."

Two men shoved a tall wooden cabinet to one side, revealing a door in the wall. It opened on an unlit room, seemingly littered with machinery. There was a window in the opposite wall. From its sill to another window in the house facing it, a bridge was improvised by a long plank. Only six or seven feet of open space, and less than twenty feet above the yard. One of the men opened the window. It swung like a door, on oiled hinges, soundlessly. He leaned out, straightened, closed the window.

"They've got somebody down there, but looking at the doors. He's smoking, wears a hat. Who goes first?"

"You do," Garcin said. "I'm last."

"All right. Keep your voices low when I open the window. Here goes." He was a middle-aged man, rather heavy. But he was across in a flash. Lorrain thought he discerned a dim shape at the other window: a watcher. Garcin

held his watch, just inside the lighted room. "Two minutes. Next—"

Another man adjusted his hat like a chap about to walk into a pouring rain, started. Lorrain could hear him pant. The stunt was not very dangerous, but with someone very close, listening, it assumed a definitely impressive quality.

"Made it," someone whispered. Then, "Hold it. Someone's come to speak to the guard. They're not looking up so far—"

"Tell me when it's clear," Garcin said. He stepped back into the large room, shoved the door almost shut, probably to prevent a flow of light. "The next house has a side entrance opening on a public stairway leading down to an avenue. I don't think they've had time to figure that one out."

Lorrain asked, "But why are those chaps here? I don't understand."



"EASY enough to explain," Garcin looked up, got a signal, nodded.

"Next . . . Look, old man, Huguenain's in with the old crowd, and they knew we'd try something."

So it was arranged in advance that someone would follow Huguenain if he left anywhere suddenly. They can't use the police—first, because most of the police are over on our side sincerely, then because it attracts attention. So they called in the old guard, the Vichy Legionnaires, the Fascist Youth, all the arm-flinging-up louts, those who were for Franco, those who were for Laval. They're cowardly swine, most of them, but given clubs, ten-to-one they'll operate. Just a moment—" He pointed at the fourth man. "You're next."

"Huguenain knew we would not try to pull a killing tonight. He pretended to believe it—to see just what we had, what our plans were. Why? He knows we can't start assassinations, that it would turn the Americans against us. Also, he wanted to bunch us up, and have someone give us a going over. He didn't like to make out that paper, but didn't dare presume on our being too patient, and probably can square himself with his boss, get another assignment if he has to leave the one he's on. And he thought he'd get it back soon."

"The guy's started to look up," one of the remaining two reported. "Maybe he heard something."

"All right. Watch him," Garcin advised.

"But why would Huguenain take the chance?"

"Psychology. He can't stand suspense. Wanted to know what we had in mind. He thinks it's his job."

There was a knock on the door leading to the hall. Lorrain started violently. Garcin shrugged, smiled. "Getting impatient. You two get across quickly. He may see you, but he won't have time to do anything. Get going, no arguments—"

Then everything broke loose at once. A man's voice called out in the yard, "I see them—here, here!" Other voices rang out in various directions and the knocking on the door became loud, imperative. There were clangs, clatterings, smashing noises in different parts of the building. Women started to scream, children howled.

"Beat it, Lorrain!"

"No kidding?" Lorrain laughed nervously. "Leave you here?"

"For—" Garcin broke off, understanding it was useless to argue, and made for the rear window. But the plank had fallen into the yard, shoved by the sixth man in an excited, clumsy scramble. He was standing in the opposite window, his hand held out.

"Jump, catch hold—"

Garcin climbed on the sill, leaped back again. One had to leap from a poor angle, and even if he caught the man's hand, he would drop. A stone shattered panes of the window next to his head. The guard in the courtyard was squealing like a trapped pig.

"Beat it, all of you," Garcin shouted. "It's an order." He turned to Lorrain, calmly enough. "You're strong and quick, taller than I am. I'll hold the fort in here. Try to make it."

"No—I—"

"What good can you do? Try it!"

Garcin ran into the other room, where there was an uproar of shattering glass and planking. Lorrain got on the sill. But he could not straighten up, and even if he caught the opposite sill, his body would smash against the bricks. It was one of those stunts that appear simple and prove hard.

By that time, the house was erupting like a volcano, a concert of screams, squeals, curses and exclamations, in French, Spanish, Italian and Arabic. Garcin had a chair in his hand, and was knocking heads and hands as they groped through the broken door to unfasten the iron bar. The others were reaching in with canes and sticks, prodding and clubbing.

"I thought I told you—" Garcin started furiously.

"Tried. Can't make it—" Lorrain had picked up a piece of polished wood, the handle to some machine or other, perhaps eighteen inches long and two inches thick. He struck at heads and hands, gingerly at first, then after taking a rap across his knuckles, whole-heartedly.

Oddly, the crowd outside did not seem composed of individuals, but was like a giant beast with several heads and a score of swarming hands, some brandishing weapons, others clutching at the bar. That beast howled and swore with a dozen voices.

"We—got to hold—until the cops come," Garcin informed him, "or we take a nasty beating—brains knocked out—broken bones—dirty guys—"

"Yes—yes—"

But the door was coming apart rapidly, and

missiles were flung in, shoes and bits of wood at first, then heavier objects, stones, vases, bottles. Then a flood of liquid struck Lorrain, half-blinded him. One of the attackers had found a mop, and was sloshing it through the door from side to side.

A man was in, somewhere at knee level. Lorrain bent and swiped at him. Something hit him in the neck. He gave ground. This gunless battle was proving hard and painful. It was no joke. And he kept thinking of what Garcin had said: "*Your brains knocked out—*"

To have escaped three years of war and end up kicked to death by hoodlums in a tenement shop, that would be irony for you! He tightened his grip on the improvised club and struck to stun, not to hurt.

He saw the chair knocked from Garcin's hands, saw the cripple reel back and sink to his knees from a kick. He stepped to one side to cover him, snapped the end of the club beneath the kicker's chin. He felt the satisfying tingle of the impact through his wrist and elbow to his very heart. Then the wet mop slapped his face again, and he lost all caution, counter-attacked. He had this advantage: that they had to locate a moving target, while anything he hit scored for him.

Nevertheless, he was forced into a corner, blows forced him to cover his face. He had the sensation that he would lose consciousness, collapse and be kicked to death.

But a piercing whistle-blast resounded right in the room, and brought quiet. As the sound died in his ears, Lorrain became aware that he had heard it for quite a while, coming nearer.

"What's the matter here?"

CHAPTER VIII

THE "SELECTIVE KILLING"



LORRAIN took breath, wiped his face, his eyes. A medium-sized young man in khaki stood in the center of the shop, an American police sergeant. There was a city cop present, too, with his thumbs passed through his belt, rocking from heels to toes. Two more white-gaitered soldiers stood in the doorway, others were in the hall. They said nothing, did not appear very interested, but the trapped attackers made no effort to leave the building.

The young captain saw them clearly for the first time. There were more than a dozen of them, mostly in their late teens, wearing caps and sweaters, the multicolored pullovers of Oranese style. They did not appear big, muscular, formidable. But they were dangerous rats. There were two men present, in their thirties, better dressed, probably the leaders. There had been more, but they had escaped to other floors as the patrol arrived. Lorrain found

some consolation in seeing a number of them marked and dazed.

"Come on, what's the matter?" the sergeant repeated. His French was very clear.

"No Americans here, Sarge," one of the men spoke from the doorway, in English.

"Still, maybe this needs looking into," the sergeant opined. He resumed, with great patience, "There has been fighting. What is the matter?" He turned to the local cop, who spread his hands in complete ignorance, replaced his thumbs carefully. He addressed Lorrain. "You, there, you're an officer? What happened?"

"I—I was visiting my friend here, and those people broke in—"

"Some more local politics," the man at the door said wearily.

"Looks like it."

The sergeant addressed the cop in French. "Can't you ask them?"

"Me? Yes, if you wish." The policeman cleared his throat. "Alors, what passes here?"

Garcin had cleaned his face somewhat, was wiping blood leaking from his nose.

"You might ask them."

"They haven't offered to speak." The cop looked about calmly. "It is necessary that someone starts. Then all will."

"Here is my identification card. Garcin, ex-officer—" The card passed from the policeman to the sergeant, to the man in the door, to other soldiers. "I am now a carpenter. You see the address? A friend of mine, who owns this shop, has given me permission to come here and repair a—that machine over there. I brought my friend, an Army captain in active service. We had been here a few minutes when these people broke in and started beating us. Naturally, we defended ourselves. I'm sure that it is a case of mistaken identity, that this—this little party—was for my friend, whom I shall warn—"

"What have you to say?" the policeman asked the others.

"I—well, the gentleman is right, there has been a mistake," one of the older men said. "We—we apologize. Is that right?"

It was right, they all nodded.

"Do you make charges?" the cop asked.

"I do not," Garcin declared. "But I ask that you take the names of these men, and inform the proprietor of this shop. For damages to the door."

"You must make charges for me to take their names."

"I'll give my name voluntarily," the man who had spoken resumed. "Damages shall be paid for the door." He lifted his hat from a bald, lumpy, bruised forehead. "You are very kind, monsieur."

"Not at all," Garcin replied automatically.

"Let 'em go," the sergeant ordered, and the men filed out.

"Didn't I tell you?" the private in the doorway asked.

"So what?" the noncom wondered.

"May I speak to you a moment, Sergeant?" Lorrain asked in English.

"Sure. What's on your mind, Captain?"

"Which way are you and your men going?"

"Anywhere in the neighborhood. Far down as the prefecture, far up as the Place Foch." He grinned understandingly. "Want a lift part of the way? All right." He led the procession down the stairs, shoving through the crowd of tenants, men, women and children, with good-natured words here and there. He took leave of the cop at the street door, headed up the cobbled ramp. "Politics, Captain?"

"In a way, yes."

"They're hell for that out here, aren't they?"

He looked up at the moon, above the dome of the Mosquée. "Fine night. But it makes them nervous. Second row around here tonight. Some guys beat up one of your officers, just a kid, too, right around here. We had to call an ambulance. Looked like a concussion to me—"

"Was that officer a lieutenant? What did he look like?"

"Stocky, well set-up, very young. His face was bloody, so you couldn't tell much. Kind of short, bushy hair." The central square and the Hotel de Ville were in sight. "Well, you'll be all right from here. So long, Captain."

"Thank you, Sergeant."

"O.K. Any time."

"Nice fellow," Garcin remarked as he limped along. "Glad we had him along down below."

"I think they beat up young Rémy," Lorrain said to his companion, and told him what the sergeant had related.

"Sure, that was him," Garcin chuckled. "They'd probably been told to do a job on anyone who came out of that house. Shows Huguenain's not so smart, he never thought to tip them off about the lad. Forgot him."

"Did you?"

"I wonder," Garcin was silent for a while. "It will show Huguenain just how his little pals operate. I hope the kid's not hurt much."

"Are you really going to show him that paper?"

"No, no. That wouldn't achieve anything."

Lorrain was puzzled.

"So what? We did all this to get Huguenain fired from his soft job in Algiers? That's pretty easy for what he did and the beating we got. My ribs hurt every time I take a breath."

"I ache all over," Garcin hobbled along. "No, that's not all. Fact is, I am not trying to make trouble for Huguenain on his job. Nothing like that."

"Then what are you trying to do?"

"I won't tell you now. You might try to stop it," Garcin hesitated. "No. You did not live in France and here before the Americans came. You're a whole man, not a cripple. You don't

know just how much hate you can store up, suffering and waiting."

"I didn't laugh every day in Libya, either."

"That's different, very different. You remember the one night in Syria, don't you? It was like that months on end, even if the pistol wasn't before your eyes. Get it?"

"In a way," Lorrain agreed.

"You read that paper he signed, didn't you?"

"Heard you read it, yes."

"That'll do it. I don't know just how long it will take. You can't always reach the people you need in wartime, but then, some wills are stronger than others. The trigger is pressed—Huguenain is a dead man."

"How? What has that paper to do with that?"

"When Huguenain gets it, you'll understand. Psychology, old man. What he calls selective killing." He repeated slowly, "*Le sage choisit ses morts*—the wise man picks his dead."



INSIDE an hour, Lorrain would know whether his destination was France, Corsica or northern Italy. He looked down from the promenade deck and saw his men packed with the mass of khaki-clad soldiers. He commanded something more than two hundred Moroccan partisans, popularly known as *goumiers*.

Leaning on the rail, watching the escort vessels in the near distance, Lorrain wondered if his swift assignment to this raiding unit three weeks ago had been to get rid of him, to separate him from Garcin. Then he realized that he had besieged the army authorities for active service, remembered that he had been permitted to retain his rank as captain—some who transferred reverted to their original rank in the French service—and knew that he had a

slight touch of defeat neurosis, the malady of doubt and suspicion rife among the French in North Africa.

The sea wind seemed to blow through his brain and clear it; the prospect of action was as warming as the sunshine. He dispelled the atmosphere of filth and treason. Certainly, there were men in the National Liberation Movement who did not belong, but it was just that the 'men of the first hour,' the Gaullists, should not ask or expect special consideration. They were Frenchmen, fortunate enough to have done their duty. They had not served for praise or profit.

Ferrand tapped him. "Wasn't that chap you had the mix-up with called Huguenain?"

Lorrain started. "Yes."

"Here—I have something to attend to—just popped up to give it to you. Only one aboard, unless I'm mistaken." He put a folded newspaper in Lorrain's hand and hurried away.

Lorrain opened the flimsy sheet.

MADMAN KILLS COLONEL

Colonel Huguenain, a distinguished officer, ranking high in the Legion of Honor, member of the staff of a cabinet minister in the National Liberation Government, had been shot and killed in his office by a job-seeker.

The murderer, who wore the uniform of a lieutenant in the Colonial infantry, had called at the offices six or seven times in two days, asking for an interview with Huguenain. The colonel had refused to see him and once, in answer to a subordinate who asked him what motive he should give the man for the refusal, had snapped, "Tell him to go and get himself hanged elsewhere."

An orderly had seen the colonel enter his office after lunch, but claimed he did not remember seeing the murderer, who must have



Join this seance kill-sequence and see if THE SPIRIT WAS WILLING

to cut short the ninth life of Albertus Magnus with an ice pick, thereby bouncing Pete Stahl, the phony Holy Joe, right into Jeffery Wren's lap. From then on the psychic sleuth and his spook-snoop sidekick, Policewoman Zoe Osbourn, are practically paddling in gore up to their armpits, till they wind up toasting "blood in your eye" in the white house with blue shudders, in this smashing new novelette by

G. T. FLEMING-ROBERTS

Watch Mr. Maddox cash in on a wad of DEAD MAN'S DOUGH

at the Fairgrounds track in New Orleans, with World-Art Pictures using the colorful background for the filming of their latest epic. Even Cassidy has a part in the movie. But the cry of "Lights! Action! Camera!" soon changes to "Lights! Action! Murder!" when homicide ad libs itself into the script and Colonel Cassoway-Clarendon, known to the trade as Absinthe Charlie of the Slippery Thumb, promotes himself right through death's door, in this latest in the ever-popular series by

T. T. FLYNN

Plus: A new Doc Pierce story, *The Doctor's Test*, by RICHARD DERMODY; and two exciting shorts by RUSSELL BRANCH and WILLIAM R. COX.

10 DIME
DETECTIVE
MAGAZINE

August issue on sale now.

sneaked in unnoticed. The first warning that anything had gone wrong was a series of pistol shots. Colonel Huguenain had been hit three times, each shot mortal. One had pierced his throat, one the skull above the left ear. The third had destroyed the eyes.

Then, as the newspaper phrased it, the murderer had done justice upon himself. He had held the gun under his own chin, and had been identified only by some papers in his pockets. Investigation revealed that the man, really a lieutenant, had been called by Colonel Huguenain from his unit in Syria for special work. After the armistice in mid-July 1941, he had accompanied Huguenain back to France, had worked under his orders. For the past year, he had been on a special mission in Morocco.

Consulted by the Algiers police, his superiors in Morocco had reported that the man had been a conscientious subordinate, somewhat retiring and moody. Two weeks before, he had applied for emergency leave, giving family affairs as a motive. There had seemed no reason to refuse him. Colonel Huguenain left a widow, a son, lieutenant in the Air Corps, two younger sons and a daughter. Unconfirmed reports were that the slayer was married, that his wife and two small children lived in Southern France.

"When Huguenain gets it, you'll understand," Lorrain could hear Garcin's voice saying again.

Yes, he understood. He had heard the murderer's name three times: when the noncom had called it out in that moonlit courtyard in Syria, when he had mumbled it to Huguenain with the gun under his chin, when Garcin had read the colonel's statement. He was the fourth man in line, the man who had talked.

Garcin's plan had been cruel and yet simple. The poor chap had believed that his weakness was known only to one man alive, Huguenain. And he had been willing to live on, with a dead soul. Even Huguenain had felt that he owed him something, had kept him at his side a while. Then he had been assigned to Morocco, probably on a spying mission—what else could he be used for?

He had been satisfied to live on, trying to forget. He felt that Huguenain could not relate

the story. The other witnesses were dead, the gendarmes did not count. He had managed to forget that three men had shown him the way and he had failed. By bad luck, the emergency had caught him when he had had a moment of weakness common in all men, even the bravest. But no one knew, no one knew but Huguenain.

Garcin had located him, as he had located Lorrain. Lorrain wondered if he had written him anything, or had been content with sending him a copy of the statement. Huguenain, careful by long habit, had listed his name among the prisoners questioned, and pointed him out as the traitor, the Judas, by a simple process of elimination.

Lorrain knew that it would have been better for the man to die in that courtyard, like the others. It would have been swift, painless. He imagined the unfortunate chap's feelings as he read the statement, saw the names of witnesses. Now nine men knew of his shame. One man might keep quiet, nine would not. Some day, somewhere, in a month, a year or ten years, someone would look into his face and say, "No, I don't want to drink with you."

For killers might live down their deeds, but traitors could not. Huguenain, with all facts known, would still find people to shake his hand, to esteem him for his courage, his resolution, his very ruthlessness. But no one could trust a man who had betrayed his comrades, who had let them die in vain—no one, not even he, Lorrain, who was not sure what he would have done, who had seen the thing happening.

If that man had been assigned to his company as his second, he would have protested. His Moroccans were warriors and deserved a chief who would not fail them.

"Through with that paper?" a comrade asked.

"Quite."

"Thanks."

One of the Moroccans, scratching himself under one arm, looked up and recognized him. He showed his teeth in greeting, spoke, and several others looked up. Lorrain lifted his hand, they grinned. Their bellies were full of good food, they had fine weapons and they were off to the wars. They were happy.



SYMMES' HOLE

A Fact Story

The Captain was confident that exploration would reveal a warm country about sixty-nine miles beyond latitude 82°.

By
ROYAL ORNAN
SHREVE

A MINE of literary material little worked by writers is the *Annals of Congress*. True, most of the verbiage is utter dross. Away back in 1803 when the Twelfth Amendment to the Constitution was being debated, a new senator was "astonished to see gentlemen going over so much unnecessary ground," and

As it was in the beginning
Is today official sinning,
And shall be forevermore.

Nevertheless, there's gold in them there old books. If the reader will blow the pungent dust off the volume for 1821 he will discover a gorgeous story.

James Monroe was President then. The vice-president, Daniel D. Tompkins, former Governor of New York, was in the chair of the Senate.

Mr. Tompkins recognized a man with unruly red hair and a rusty coat who brandished a document in a crippled left hand as "the Senator from Kentucky."



The senator, Colonel Richard Mentor Johnson, announced that he rose to present a petition from a worthy citizen of his state.

That was signal for exodus of a majority of his forty-odd colleagues, for though "Colonel Dick" was a newcomer in the Senate he had long represented the "Old Georgetown District" in the Lower House and had acquired reputation as a presenter of petitions—mostly from veterans of the recent war with England who could not get on the pension rolls.

But soon the self-exiled were trooping back. Word had gone through the cloak-rooms that this one was different—very different. Instead of a pension, this petitioner was asking that Congress supply money for an expedition to explore and annex the *inside of the earth!*



A FACT, and the petitioner was no ordinary crack-pot! He was a former officer of the United States Army, Captain John Cleves Symmes, with fifteen years service in the artillery to his credit, a family background, related by blood and marriage to some of the most politically potent men of the West.

As result of profound cogitation, Captain Symmes had evolved a theory that the earth must be hollow, had "proved" it mathematically, astronomically, and theologically—as the spirit of the time required—and was patriotically desirous that the benefits he foresaw should accrue to his country.

Remember, the time was the gray dawn of Science when evolvers had little data upon which to base theories. The idea that the earth was round had not yet won universal acceptance, especially in the raw West. Schoolmasters were willing to "teach her round or flat," as patrons preferred. Who knew what the polar regions might contain? Explorers had little more than dented the Arctic. The Antarctic was a vast *terra incognita*. Either might hide the opening into the interior which Symmes' theory envisaged.

The Captain's background was impressive. It stretched across two centuries to the Reverend Zachariah Symmes who landed at Boston, from the good ship *Griffin*, in 1634. A man of learning, his descendants had followed in his footsteps. In every generation there had been ministers—several with degrees from Harvard—lawyers, physicians, and just before the Revolution one of the lawyers had achieved place, wealth and power. This was the Captain's uncle, for whom he was named, Judge John Cleves Symmes, who married a daughter of the great William Livingston of the New York patroon family.

When the colonies revolted, Livingston became the patriot governor of New Jersey and opened the way for his son-in-law to a political career, first as delegate to the Continental Congress, later as chief justice of the state,

finally as judge of the newly organized Northwest Territory, in 1787.

The following year the judge, backed by Livingston influence and money, secured from the new national government a tract of a million acres in the Miami Valley. On it he founded a town to which he gave the name Cincinnati.

To protect the settlement from Indian raids, the government built a log army post, Fort Washington. Among the garrison officers was a young lieutenant who promptly fell in love with the judge's daughter Anna; also into trouble, for the judge was not pleased. Lieutenant William Henry Harrison might be an FFV and son of a governor of the Old Dominion, but the governor was dead, leaving the son with little more than his army pay of something like a dollar a day, therefore no fit suitor for the heiress to a million acres.

But the daughter thought otherwise and so did her mother, with whose connivance the lovers were secretly married. Faced with an accomplished fact, the judge took a leaf out of his father-in-law's book and furthered the career of his unwelcome son-in-law—a career fated to lead to a governorship, military fame and, after forty years, one brief month in the White House.

In 1800 another lieutenant was assigned to Fort Washington—the judge's nephew, who doubtless owed his commission to the uncle's influence.

Perhaps the nephew already exhibited the impractical traits that would lead him to formulate his theory of a hollow earth. At any rate, it seems that the judge did little more to further his career. Eight years later we find the future scientist, still a lieutenant, stationed at Fort Adams, the post in the far southwest corner of Mississippi Territory where Dr. Hale would lay the opening scene of his immortal story, *The Man Without a Country*. There, on Christmas Day of 1808, he married Mrs. Marianne Lockwood, widow of a brother officer who had died of "the fever" a few months before.

Evidence, this marriage, that the groom lacked his uncle's sense of worldly values. The bride brought him a ready-made family of six—five girls and a boy—and very little else. Even a colonel, with two dollars a day and "extra rations" worth another dollar, might well have hesitated to assume such responsibility; and to make matters worse, Mrs. Symmes presented him with five more mouths to feed within about as many years.

Tardily promoted to captain, he fought right gallantly in the second war with England, contributing to some of the few victories won by Americans on the Canadian front.

Then came peace, and reduction in the army. Captain Symmes resigned and embarked in business, at St. Louis, as an army contractor.

Already he was deep in speculation concerning the architecture of the earth. Early in 1818 speculation bore fruit in the form of a pamphlet setting forth *The Theory of Concentric Spheres and Polar Voids*.

The earth, it asserted, consists of a series of hollow spheres, like those ivory balls carved by the patient artisans of China, with an opening near either pole. How many spheres it did not specify, but we learn, from a treatise later published by a convert, that the minimum was probably five, the maximum eight.

Concerning the Polar Voids the Captain was more explicit. Their centers would be found removed some twelve degrees from the poles and "void" was a happy choice for name: he supposed the northern one to be four thousand miles in diameter, the southern six thousand. The "verge" of the Northern Void would be encountered "in the neighborhood of Spitzbergen."

A second pamphlet followed within a few months, setting forth mathematical "proofs." We quote:

With dividers describe a circle on a plane of loose texture—a sheet of paper sprinkled with fine sand will answer—and in the center add a very small circle; then draw a line through the center. It is evident (as matter gravitates matter in proportion to quantity and distance) that either half of the inner circle, being almost entirely surrounded by matter, must be very little gravitated centerwise; so being suspended, only a rotary motion is needed to throw it compactly toward the outer circle. This being admitted, it follows that half way from the outer to the inner circle of matter so thrown out, a like rarity, suspension or balance of gravity should prevail, and hence a disposition to concentric circles; therefore it follows that successive subdivisions should exist, gradually lessening in force and quantity. By applying this principle to the earth I found the necessity for concentric spheres.

We pause while the reader digests that—if he can—then turn to another pamphlet wherein we read:

Celestial appearances favor the theory. The rings of Saturn, the belts of Jupiter, the circles about the poles of Mars prove these planets to be concentric spheres with polar openings. . . . All planets seem to be hollow spheres. . . . Gravity is due to the pressure of an impalpable element composed of minute concentric spheres, *pushing* instead of *pulling*.

The theological argument ran thus:

God never uses more material than needful to accomplish the object in view. Straws, bones, some plants, even the hairs

of our heads are hollow. A hollow earth would answer every purpose as well as a solid one.



CONCERNING conditions within his hollow globe, the Captain was equally positive. The interior—not only the center but the spaces between the spheres—would be found to be sulubrious regions, illuminated by light from the sun refracted through the Voids, and habitable on "both the convex and concave surfaces." Then:

All Northern explorers are agreed that musk ox, reindeer, bear, wolves, foxes, rabbits, partridges, come from the North every spring, return every fall. Of them only Captain Nares failed to report warm winds from the North. Ross had this experience, also Parry [the British admiral who went north in 1818, not Peary, the American who finally reached the North Pole. The latter was not born until 1856. —R. O. S.] who reported the climate so warm that it melted the tar in the seams of his ships. Kane found open water.

And, the Captain was convinced, had these explorers been conversant with his theory, the reports would have more emphatically supported it.

The difficulty which a musk ox might be supposed to experience in grazing upon a concave pasture would be overcome by the "push" of the "impalpable element," by the centrifugal force of the whirling system, or by both. Dr. Einstein would doubtless surmount it by relativity. And to Captain Symmes' credit be it said that his scheme for interior illumination anticipated by a good hundred years the Doctor's theory that light follows a curved path.

Despite confidence in his proofs and in having fathomed the purposes and methods of the Divine Architect, the Captain was willing, nay, anxious to put his theory to practical test. Could he be "supplied with one hundred brave companions, well equipped to set out from Siberia in the autumn with reindeer sleighs to pass over the ice," he would "engage to explore the concave regions, discover a warm or at least temperate country, fertile soil, well stocked with animals and vegetables, if not men, on reaching about sixty-nine miles beyond latitude 82°."

This appeal was penned when his fortunes were at lowest ebb. The contracting business had blown up, in 1819, with force sufficient to gravitate him, his family and the Theory from St. Louis to Newport, in Kentucky. One suspects the added pressure of a very palpable element: unscientific creditors, who could then throw a debtor into prison. To keep the wolf out of a densely populated home, he was lecturing and selling pamphlets up and down the

Ohio Valley—and with more success that one might suppose.

He attracted attention for the good reason that the majority of the people suffered from mental malnutrition. Largely deprived of books, their intellectual fare was chiefly long doctrinal sermons, political speeches and murder trials. A lecture on "Science" was a welcome variation. And Captain Symmes made much of an argument of tremendous appeal to expansionist Westerners who had set out blithely, only a few years before, to make the North Pole a roost for the American Eagle: "Beneath our feet are miles and miles of territory to be taken by the United States."



THERE were some carpers, of course; the evolver of a scientific theory must expect that. One such gave the captain an unintended boost. After listening to a lecture this gentleman called him an ignoramus.

That was not only insult but base slander. True, the captain's formal education had not extended much beyond the three R's, but it doubtless equaled that of the carper, and we have it from a disciple that "he had had access to several fairly well selected libraries." He resented the epithet—and reversed his theory of gravitation for the moment by pulling the carper's nose.

In the Blue Grass of 1820 that meant just one thing—pistols at ten paces. Result, triumph for the Theory of Concentric Spheres, for though its author received a slight wound in the wrist, the carper went down with a broken leg.

A duel was grand advertising and this one received wide publicity; the alleged ignoramus had stoutly offered to continue debate, while his opponent had admitted that gunpowder was an inadequate argument. Nevertheless the financial wind refused to rise above a gentle zephyr, though Captain Symmes supplemented lectures with raffles and turkey-shoots which brought in many a yokel shilling.

Tradition has it that, despairing of ever reaching the salubrious concave interior via the Siberian route, he gave thought to an alternative: a shaft to the first inter-spherical space, which, if his calculations were correct, was only a few miles beneath his feet. Doubtless tradition rests on no better foundation than gossip of carpers, but it served to fasten the name "Symmes' Hole" upon the enterprise.

Somewhere about here, Senator Johnson entered the picture.

Two men more unlike it would be hard to imagine. A portrait of the Captain depicts a long, sad, cadaverous face framed with untidy strands of graying hair that sweep his shoulders, a face which modern psychologists would call that of an introvert. As unhesitatingly they would class the senator as an extrovert.

He was one of the most astute and beyond a

doubt the most colorful figure on the national stage during his political career of half a century. As a stump speaker and in the joint debates then part of every campaign, he had few rivals. No Kentuckian had firmer hold on the affections of voters, not even mighty Henry Clay. In the Georgetown District, where his political fences were repeatedly proven "horse-high, hog-tight and bull-strong," he is said to have known not only the name of every voter but the names of the voter's children, servants, horses and hound dogs. Nor was this mere demagogic means to political ends. "The politest man in Kentucky," Colonel Dick was "everybody's friend"; Martin Van Buren, with whom he would serve as vice-president fifteen years later, even elevated him to the status of "friend of the human race."

Another tie he had with the hickory-shirted yeomanry, who could swing any election, was a studied negligence in dress. In Van Buren's time, Harriet Martineau, the English writer, was amazed to see him presiding over the Senate in a wrinkled coat, his red hair "wandering all abroad, and without a cravat." He was famed for a vest of crimson plush which he reserved for important occasions, one of them when the Kentucky Legislature proposed him as a "suitable man" to succeed President John Tyler.

Also, he possessed a sense of humor which we may guess Captain Symmes lacked. There is a portrait of the senator in Collins' *History of Kentucky*. When sitting for it he donned a cravat—a huge bow with deeply fringed ends—and the smile between it and the hair, which wanders abroad, indicates that he had read Miss Martineau's book.

Colonel Dick made it his business to welcome every newcomer to the Georgetown District, and circumstances conspired to make him unusually interested in the author of *The Theory of Concentric Spheres*.

Firstly, the colonel did not share the dislike for Yankees innate in most slave-holding Southerners. He had once loved a Yankee girl, a "school-marm," and would have married her had not his mother broken up the match. As a result he had never married. Instead he "took up" with his mother's colored maid who remained his de facto wife until her death. During the campaign of 1840, when he was for a second time the running-mate of Van Buren, Whigs made almost as much of this left-handed alliance as of the alleged virtues of "Tippecanoe and Tyler too."

There never was, in all Kentucky,
A blacker dame than Johnson's Sucky.

So ran the Whigs' battle-cry—though her name was Julia and her skin was "saddle-colored." And however much the ribald rhyme may have contributed to Whig success, it

Captain Symmes, resenting the epithet ignoramus, reversed his theory of gravitation for the moment by pulling the carper's nose.



ILLUSTRATED BY EDD ASHE

diminished not at all the popularity of her husband.

The catholicity of Colonel Dick's friendship was marred, however, by the Marshall clan of Kentucky. He may have been willing, but they were not. Cousins and nephews of the famed Chief Justice, John Marshall, they remained Federalists even after the wreck of their party, and were Colonel Dick's bitter enemies. He had once challenged their leader, Colonel Humphrey Marshall, because of an editorial in the clan newspaper; the leader had side-stepped a fight on the plea of "editorial privilege"; also because he was a married man which the challenger was not, legally. And the man who had called Captain Symmes an ignoramus was a Marshall.

Another bond between Symmes and Johnson was that army contracting business. Colonel Dick knew its vicissitudes from bitter experience. Only a few years before he and a brother had taken a flier at it, undertaking to transport and supply an expedition to the upper Missouri. They had had government auditors figure them deeply into the red, been

threatened with imprisonment, and had escaped that fate through forced sale of valuable acres, and the sympathy of a Kentucky jury. The colonel had fathered bills in Congress to do away with imprisonment for debt, and would fight until they became law.

Also he had played a conspicuous part in the recent war with England and had vast and practical sympathy for all its veterans, especially for those who had encountered rough going in civilian life.

Lastly, he was one of the most ardent of expansionists. Urging war with England in 1812, he had declared that he would never be content until she was driven from the continent, and had assured Congress that, left to the militia of Kentucky, conquest of Canada would be "a mere matter of marching."

And had others marched as effectively, the prediction might have become fact. Leaving Congress—but not resigning his seat—he recruited a Mounted Regiment from the yeomen of the Georgetown District, led it to the Canadian frontier. There, at the Battle of the Thames (October 5, 1813) one battalion, under

his brother, routed Proctor's British regulars, while the other, which he commanded in person, tackled the tougher task of disposing of Tecumseh's Indian braves posted in thick timber. He emerged from that fight almost as full of holes as the oft-cited colander, after killing in single combat an Indian chief reputed to have been the redoubtable Tecumseh himself. Carried home on a litter, he returned to Washington on crutches to receive the thanks of Congress, and a sword.



AGAIN there were carpers. The slain chief was not Tecumseh; and were he, there were other claimants for the honor—another colonel and at least two privates. But the victory had broken a long series of American disasters, and Kentuckians—barring the Marshalls—would listen to no disparagement. Their warrior-statesman was "Old Tecumseh," the "Hero of the Thames," "Savior of the West"; and none could deny that he had slain an Indian chief, be he Tecumseh or not, in single combat, a fact which Kentucky orators likened to feats of Grecian heroes under the walls of Troy.

Without any false modesty Colonel Dick not only accepted the laurels of heroism but promptly proceeded to turn them and a maimed bridle-hand—an Indian bullet had gone through it from knuckles to wrist—into political meal tickets. The hand—"Broken in your defense, my fellow countrymen"—he used for gestures.

Come peace and a full Treasury, he introduced bills that laid the foundation for the great American pension system, hammered them into law with many a left-handed gesture, and got practically every survivor of the Mounted Regiment onto the rolls, including himself. Nor were comrades of the Mounted the sole beneficiaries of his philanthropy at government expense. Advertisements in Kentucky papers urged every man who had shouldered a flint-lock to make application; his brother knew the requirements and would assist.

And for such as could not meet requirements he was ever ready to introduce "private bills." It was an off day when his green bag did not disgorge a petition for "relief" of some more or less deserving veteran who could not otherwise make the grade. And every petition was opportunity to refresh Congressional memories concerning the heroism of Kentuckians at the Thames. Colleagues presently professed ability to repeat the tale verbatim and absented themselves, especially Easterners who declared "Old Dick" a "damned nuisance" whose private bills "extracted millions from the Treasury."

But extraction was popular in the West, which felt that it received less than its share

of the national bounty, and "Old Dick" was fertile in schemes other than pensions for diverting more millions from the "effete East" to his "favorite section." Few was he able to put over; Eastern congressmen who feared to oppose pension bills turned thumbs down on proposals for a Western West Point, a national university to be located somewhere on the Western Waters, preferably in the Blue Grass. But a school for Indian boys on his plantation did receive government aid—more than enough to maintain it, according to the Marshalls.

His own education had been sketchy. Reputedly the first white child born in Kentucky—"Born in a cane-break and cradled in a sap-trough, my fellow countrymen"—he received no formal schooling until he was fifteen. Tradition makes him briefly a student at Transylvania University. If this is true, he may have imbibed from the stream of Science that trickled at the famed Western font of learning. But the trickle was thin—how thin may be judged from the opening chapters of a *History of Kentucky* by his pet enemy, Colonel Humphrey Marshall, which had appeared in 1818. To handle the story from Daniel Boone down, Marshall felt himself entirely competent, but for prehistoric times he enlisted the aid of a Transylvanian professor. Result, a tale of Indian kingdoms, cultures and conflicts which modern research places on a factual par with the Protocols of the Elders of Zion.

Whether Captain Symmes or Colonel Dick took the initiative in appealing for government aid we do not know. Suspicion points to the latter. It fits nicely into his policy of extraction, and apparently the Captain had not thought of it.

The petition set forth the Theory of Concentric Spheres, the mathematical, astronomical and theological proofs, the testimony of explorers, the miles of territory to be added to the national domain, then made modest request that Congress provide a couple of naval vessels equipped to remain in the Arctic at least two years. The first year would be spent "about latitude 80°," observing "the animals which spend the summer there, and come from the North every spring, go back every fall. Where they go man may follow if he will prepare himself."

Senators listened with mounting glee. Easterners had recognized a heaven-sent opportunity to abate the "damned nuisance" and with the deadliest of weapons—ridicule.

Colonel Dick found himself a lone Horatius, deserted even by Western colleagues who either lacked his open mind or feared to cross verbal swords with Easterners who had learned their Science at Harvard or under New Haven's elms. But he quailed no more at laughter than at the bullets of Tecumseh.

It was the constitutional duty of Congress to "promote the progress of science," he insisted.

Laughter from the sons of Eli *et al.*

Captain Symmes had devoted years to his Theory.

More laughter.

It might be true. If so, the United States should take advantage of it.

Continued laughter from the effete East.

Otherwise England, "perfidious Albion," whose red-coated myrmidons had been turned back, when they sought to invade the "land of the free and the home of the brave," by the gallant Mounted Regiment of Kentucky on the historic Field of the Thames—England would gobble up the interior as she had most of the exterior of the earth.

Peals of merriment and advice to "kill Tecumseh again."

Defeat loomed, but Colonel Dick was still undaunted. Into the faces of his foes he hurled an awesome threat.

"Laugh," he shouted, shaking that left fist. "You may laugh now, but I warn you that posterity may laugh at you as it laughs at those who laughed at Galileo and Copernicus and Columbus."

Nor was he done when a motion to table prevailed. Two years later he presented a second petition from Captain Symmes. It, too, was tabled.

Then, after lapse of thirteen years, came unpublishized vindication, if *sub rosa* history be true.

In 1836, with Colonel Dick in the vice-president's chair, Congress did vote to send an expedition to pry into the secrets of the Polar Regions—the famous Wilkes Expedition to the Antarctic—and though Captain Symmes' Theory was not mentioned in debate, there is a tradition—a circumstantial tradition—that Lieutenant Wilkes and the imposing group of scientists assigned to accompany him received *private* instructions to keep eyes open for the mighty Void the Captain had said would be found not far south of Cape Horn. What the expedition discovered was a continent; nevertheless posterity seems entitled to a chuckle, and Colonel Dick to credit for sincerity.

The Captain was dead then, after a valiant attempt to put the Theory over without government aid. Somehow he managed a lecture tour of the East, appeared in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, even at sundry seats of learning. Harvard and Yale turned cold shoulders, but lesser seats were not so uppish. An alumnus of Union College, writing sixty years later, records that his lecture there was well attended, that many of the audience, including several faculty members, took copious notes.

He died in 1829, at Hamilton, Ohio, and was buried in the City Cemetery. Some years later a son, on whom he had inflicted the name Americus Vespucius, erected a monument over the grave—a square shaft of marble topped by a hollow sphere with Polar Voids. Later still,

the city voted to transform the cemetery into a park. Then legal complications arose. The land had been donated as a burial ground; title would revert to donor's heirs were it not so used. One grave at least must remain, so the ashes of the forgotten scientist and his unique monument were left to keep the contract intact.



AMERICUS V. settled on a farm in Kentucky. There he was discovered and interviewed, sometime in the '80's, by a free lance writer who had stumbled onto the Symmes story. His faith in the Theory was still as robust as when he planned his father's monument, despite half a century of exploration that had seen disastrous contraction of the possible area of Polar Voids.

Another son, John Cleves, Jr., graduated from West Point and also attained the rank of captain. He, too, had a flair for bizarre speculation. He tinkered with flying machines and prophesied that man would eventually navigate the air, an idea regarded, during his lifetime, as every whit as crazy as the Theory of Concentric Spheres.

Nevertheless the Theory survives—as inspiration for wonder tales. Even before the first petition to Congress, its literary possibilities were recognized. In 1820, one Captain Adam Seaborn ground out a story based on it, a modest "12 mo." of 248 pages, entitled *Symsonia*. It achieved notice in the *North American Review* of July, 1821. The reviewer treated story and basic Theory with heavy sarcasm, dismissed the Theory not as scientifically unsound but because, did Polar Voids of such vast dimensions exist, they would have been discovered by some of the Yankee ships then scouring the Seven Seas in search of profit. "If there were two bags of coffee in the mouth of Hell, there would be at least two Americans after them."

Since then, Seaborn has had a fairly steady succession of imitators, and they have kept pace with the progress of exploration, contracting the area of the Voids as it advanced. The author of one of the most recent yarns reduces the Southern Void from six thousand miles to an ice-walled shaft so narrow that his hero is barely able to squeeze a dirigible through. Another abandons the Voids for Captain Symmes' alternate route, provides his hero with a tank equipped with an auger which, upended in the Sahara, quickly bores its way down.

Arrived at the "temperate concave region," all heroes have adventures amazing but basically similar, in which readers taste the flavor of *Gulliver's Travels*, Prescott's *Conquests*, with a dash perhaps of Humphrey Marshall's *History of Kentucky*.

Nor is there reason to believe that the vein has been worked out.



SWAIN'S LANDFARING

By

ARTHUR D. HOWDEN SMITH

THE STORY THUS FAR:

SWAIN ASLIEF the Orkneyman, swash-buckling 12th-century sea-rover, sails his longboats to Constantinople, where he becomes a favorite of the EMPEROR MANUEL, whose empire is threatened by his brother, CAESAR ANDRONICUS. While Manuel is away defending his northern frontier, the Orkneyman, wielding his famous sword, Skullbiter, defeats an attempt by Andronicus

to kidnap and marry Swain's ward, QUEEN KRISTIN, exiled from Norway by her former husband and married now to GRIM GUSLI, a Norse nobleman and officer of the Emperor's Varangian Guard.

Swain is on his way to join the forces defending Jerusalem, or Jorsalaheim as it is called by the Norsemen, but the Emperor prevails upon him to try to capture Andronicus, who is ravaging the Euxine coast and is planning to set himself up, with the aid of MAS-

"Would you let Sinan trap you with his foul spells?" Swain snarled. "Forget these folk have women's shapes!"



ILLUSTRATED BY HARVE STEIN

SOUD, the Seljuk Sultan of Iconium, as a menace to Christendom. He also commissions Swain to see **QUEEN THEODORA**, widow of King Baldwin, when he arrives in Jerusalem, and report back to him on whether she would make a suitable bride for the Emperor.

The Orkneyman sets out with his men in three longboats and three of the Emperor's dromonds, accompanied by **JOHN PALAEOLOGOS**, one of the Emperor's best seamen; **ERIC BITLING**, his own forecandle man; and **LOGE THE LAPP**, his expert archer. They overtake Andronicus' ships and discover that he has joined up with **OLVIR ROSTA**,

"the Roysterer," Norse outlaw who is Swain's mortal enemy since he killed the Orkneyman's mother. After a bitter but inconclusive sea battle, the forces of Andronicus and Rosta take to the land, where they are reinforced by the paynim hosts of Sultan Massoud. Landing at Trebizond, imperial outpost city, Swain rallies the frontier guards and pursues his quarry overland toward Jerusalem. Once he traps the forces of Rosta and Andronicus, but just at the turn of the battle, reinforcements from the Sultan arrive to cover their retreat. Following in their wake, Swain and his company arrive at the gates of Jerusalem.

They are met by SIR OLVARD THOR-BIORN, a Norseman who is a sub-prior of the Hospital of St. John, and are escorted to KING AMALRIC'S court. There Swain finds Andronicus accepted as an honored guest, and Olvir Rosta and his men lodged with the Templars. Swain and his company are quartered with the Hospitalers, and he is required to swear that none of them will draw steel in private quarrels while they are in the Holy City.

The King, he finds, is easily swayed, and Andronicus now has his ear. However, Amalric promises to send a messenger to Emperor Manuel to confirm Swain's word that Andronicus intends to ally himself with the paynims. Swain finds friends in both Sir Olvard and in GOULBAIN, the King's jester, who is in reality a wise and clever advisor to the King. Queen Theodora turns out to be a flighty lady who is much impressed at the moment with Andronicus. Then one day on a hunting party, a group of Assassins, the most daring of the paynim tribes, kidnaps Theodora with the connivance of Andronicus, who goes away with them. The same day Amalric gets word from Manuel justifying Swain's report of Andronicus, adding that the Emperor is sending a hundred thousand troops and the Imperial fleet, with Queen Kristin and Grim Gusli, to help put down Massoud.

During the ceremonies at the gates of Jerusalem when Kristin and Gusli and the Emperor's troops arrive, some more Assassins try to kill the royal party, but Kristin and the others fight them off. Plans are then discussed for striking back at SINAN, the fabled leader of the hashish-eating Assassins, whom no outsider has ever seen. Amalric urges them to bide their time because the Master of the Templars, one of the most powerful men in Jerusalem, has dealings with Sinan and would not permit the undertaking. So the troops of Swain and the King set out together to drive back the Seljuks.

The attackers march in three separate columns, and that led by Amalric is joined by the forces of the PRINCE OF ANTIOCH and the COUNT OF TRIPOLI, chief marcher lords of the Kingdom. The former lord is accompanied by his flirtatious wife, MELISANDE, sister of Amalric and Theodora, who makes advances to Swain but whom he repulses, thereby earning her hatred.

As soon as they cross the border marches, a large force of white-cloaked Seljuks attacks the King's column, but Swain arrives in time to beat them off. With them Swain sees Andronicus and Olvir, the latter having joined the Seljuks when he was sent by Amalric with his forces to fight the heathens to the north. The next day they are again attacked, but hold their own, and the following day they come upon the main forces of the enemy, countless thousands deployed on a great plateau. The

columns led by Swain and the King attack, while the Byzantines, led by Kristin over a different route, remain in hiding until the paynims have charged, then attack by surprise on their flank, thus springing Swain's trap.

PART III

THE Varangians quickened their pace to a run, while the Cretan slingers maintained their methodical gait, raking the flank of the Seljuks with their leaden pellets. The Huns cased their bows, drew swords or maces and charged on the right of the Norsemen. Off to the left, Swain marked the True Cross, deep in the heathens' center. The mystic symbol was slanted forward in summons to its followers, and they were not reluctant in response. The King was making a good battle. And Grim seemed to be holding his own, despite that he had parted with so many of his choicest warriors.

Andronicus and Olvir, and the green-turbaned men who abetted them, had herded the Seljuks opposite into a pretense of order. A body of the Roysterer's outlaws had appeared from nowhere, and gathered behind him. Ever prudent of his own head, he was content to bide the impending shock. But not so the Caesar. The moment Andronicus perceived Kristin's queenly figure, he went as berserk as Grettir's self. Careless who followed him, he thundered down upon the point of the Varangians' wedge, and strove to leap his horse within reach of her.

Kristin, for her part, would have pushed forward to meet him but for the pressure of the Guardsmen around her, too loyal to Grim to permit her to take the risk. Three men perished under the giant Caesar's sword, and Swain swung right to take him in the rear. But in that instant Olvir elected to charge, thinking to exploit the confusion. Andronicus, alert even in his rage, saw that he must be trapped if he persisted, hacked free of the hands snatching at his bridle and spurred out of danger to rejoin Olvir. He was in the Seljuk's van, his face flushed and his golden beard abristle, when the two lines clashed together with a vigor which lifted horses off their hoofs.

For a space the heathen overbore the Christians by sheer weight of numbers; but the orderly resistance of Swain's array sapped their strength, while the ruthless pecking of the slingers undermined their confidence. They were used to arrows; arrows could be seen. But there was something uncanny about these unseen messengers of death, buzzing through the air. A whisper spread from man to man: "These folk are not human. They are Afrits. Shaitan fights against us!"

A mighty clamor of voices rose from the center. Swain stood up in his stirrups. Amalric had sliced the heathen host in twain. The

Templars were wheeling to attack the Seljuk left in the rear.

"It is finished," shouted the Orkneyman. "The King wins. Forward, all! One last push! And heed me, carles. He who wills it may take Andronicus for me, but Olvir is mine, alone."

The white-cloaked ranks were split asunder like wave-spume on the mist-hung skerries of the North. And foremost of the fugitive throngs rode Andronicus and Olvir, slashing a red path to make good their own safety.

Swain met the King late that afternoon in the abandoned camp of the Seljuks. Amalric was sipping a flagon of wine while his squires unarmed him. His features, to the Orkneyman's surprise, were gloomy and dejected.

"What goes wrong?" Swain demanded.

"Naught you could have voided for us, Swain," the King replied with a mournful smile. "Your plan was good. The Kingdom is saved—for this year."

"But why unarm? Have you taken hurt?"

"Not so, friend." The King strove unsuccessfully to cast off his mood of depression. "Why wear mail when the battle is over?"

"You will not pursue Massoud?"

"And risk our victory in yon tangle of de-files? Iconium drew off with his favorite emirs, and more men than we can muster, at the first sign of defeat. We are in the same plight as always in this sore-pressed land, Swain. We are too few. Defeat, for us, is disaster; victory, at best, means an opportunity lost. Did we have the men the West could spare us, I'd drive the Sultan into the Eastern



To Swain's surprise, he found King Amalric gloomily sipping a flagon of wine while his squires unarmed him. "What goes wrong?" he demanded. "Have you taken hurt?"

desert. But now I must yield it to the Emperor to advantage himself of what we wrought."

Swain was silent in his dismay. He glanced around him. At one side, a group of lords were, like the King, being stripped of armor. Away by itself, the True Cross stood upright on a silver altar, guarded by two of the Patriarch's mailed chaplains. No man paid homage to It. And to Swain there was a suggestion of despair and hopelessness in Its lonely magnificence. It was a reliquary, no more, like any other jeweled casket containing bones or hanks of hair of saints so remote in the past that they had become little more than names in men's memories.

A gust of anger possessed him. But before he could speak Goulbain strolled out of one of the paynim tents.

"Our Sultan takes the field in right sultanly fashion, brother," he said, twirling his bauble. "And when he abandons the field he doth so also with a most sultanly extravagance. Here is a rich store of goblets, ewers, basins, rugs and silken stuffs, not to forget certain objects more seemly for ladies—" He sensed the tension, and paused. "But what is toward, Brother Swain?"

Swain answered him bitterly.

"Why, for all his haste, Massoud may ride at ease to Iconium. It is our part to doff mail, and feast on his leavings."

"Swain's thought is that we should pursue at any cost," Amalric explained, without resentment. "I have tried to tell him why we dare not venture the host in what, belike, might be three or four scattered onfalls."

The jester looked thoughtful.

"If we had a few more men like Swain, I'd cry him on. But there is the one Swain. And bethink you, Swain, most of the folk of the host are taken from the fields. If they are absent overlong the harvest will suffer. Then the folk would go hungry. They do not begrudge fighting to defend themselves, but they are loath to be kept in arms once the land is safe. Soon they will be complaining, one to another, 'What seeks the King? Our lord must crave outland fiefs. Ai-ai, but it will go parlous hard with us to die in heathen lands, and be buried in unconsecrated ground.'"

Swain tugged uncomfortably at his beard. The King dropped a hand on Goulbain's shoulder, offered one to the Orkneyman.

"It is Goulbain's way to speak wiser than I," he said apologetically. "Now, is it plain to you, friend, why you found me downcast? I feel even as you do. If we might pursue Massoud to Iconium, levy a tribute on him, push back the marches and erect more fiefs— But these are idle words. I lack knights to swear fealty for a moiety of fiefs within the marches. Where could I look for more to build new castles, maintain men-at-arms? Aye, and curb the paynims to decent Christianity?"

"I was wrong," Swain admitted gruffly. "But I call you to mind, King, that—"

A riot of hoofbeats checked him—hoofbeats and the strumming of guitars, gay voices raised in song. The three turned curiously to discover the source.

Out from between the empty tents poured a gaudy cavalcade of sprightly ladies, truant knights with armor unstained, jongleurs whose curled and scented locks brushed their shoulders, pretty pages and stalwart huntsmen who, to say truth, had hung shamefaced in the rear. Melisande of Antioch was leader of the light-some band. She put her horse straight at Swain, reining in only when the beast's forehoofs sprayed earth upon his motionless figure.

"We must thank you for a rare day's sport, brother," she exclaimed to Amalric. "By'r Lady, never was I more thrilled! I thought Messer Swain had lost it for you, but in the end he proved himself a stout knight, albeit a stupid one." She smiled insolently into Swain's bleak eyes. "Hah, what say you, Messer Blood-and-Brawn? How chanced it with the Caesar? Did you slay Andronicus, after all?"



SWAIN stared her up and down, from kirtle to peaked headdress, then gave her his back. He continued to Amalric, as if he had not been interrupted, "This foray had three reasons, one personal to yourself. We have saved the land from Massoud, yes. But we have not recovered Theodora, and we shall not recover your sister until we have smitten the Caesar and Olvir, your enemies—and mine."

"True," assented the King, cheerfully ignoring Melisande. In fact, there was more of humor in his bearing than there had been. "What of them?"

"They left a broad track," replied Swain. "We took amany captives, and they needed little urging to tell what they knew. Andronicus and Olvir have fled to Masrouf, where Theodora awaits them in Sinan's keeping."

Melisande gasped.

"Christ's Blood," she cried. "This is a man!"

Her brother spoke to her for the first time.

"That has ever been my thought of Swain," he said gently.

"Swain!" she protested. "Not so! Andronicus, who challenges the Old Man of the Mountain, himself!"

There was nothing gentle in Amalric's reproof.

"He risks nothing with Sinan, who yields to Sinan's evil purposes. Raymond!" He raised his voice. "Your lady awaits your attention."

The little Prince came running.

"Certainly, good brother, certainly," he called. "Come, my love, can you not see that our brother—"

"I can see a man when he shows himself, my puny lord," she retorted. "Get you—"

But she let him take her bridle, and lead her to the group of feudatories, who had watched the brief passage with uneasiness for Swain's purpose. Her gabbling train, somewhat sobered and depressed, followed in awed silence. Swain's lips twitched. He found pleasure in an Amalric who asserted himself so deftly. But he was instantly not so sure of the King when he noted the puzzled wrinkles in Amalric's forehead.

"I see not what we may achieve, if they dwell in Sinan's protection," Amalric said.

"Then you see not so far as I," Swain retorted. "This Masrouf may be a strong place, but the Greeks say that any castle may be carried at a price."

The King shook his head.

"Both Antioch and Tripoli live in illicit truce with Sinan," he answered. "It would begger their revenues to fight him. Did I summon them to do so, they would rebel. But worse, Swain, as you know, the Templars have an understanding with him—else, they tell me, not one of them might sleep safe, even within Kerak's triple walls."

"Goulbain," Swain said curtly, "bid the Master of the Templars to wait upon the King."

The jester twisted his long features into a grimace.

"By my bauble," he chuckled, "so Goulbain must serve *two* brothers!"

Again there was no rancor in Amalric's smile of assent.

"Swain is a man who must convince himself. As he should, being Swain." And as the jester glided away, he added, "My sister has betrayed our father's memory. His spirit cries to me for vengeance. But I may not risk the future of the Kingdom for my own pride or my father's memory."

Swain frowned.

"I do not understand," he confessed. "But what my own spirit bids me to do, that will I. I have sworn an oath to myself."

The Master of the Templars was a Burgundian, a rugged, heavy-set man in black armor, whose face, in the frame of his raised visor, was as impassive as a granite curtain-wall in one of the castles of his Order. He listened silently to the King's statement of Swain's tidings, his hard black eyes vigilant and inscrutable; but when the time came for him to reply, his voice was surprisingly suave, priestlike, and to Swain's fancy.

"My brothers and I have given thought to this ill happening, Monseigneur," he said. "We have taken account of the grief it has caused you, but we dare not counsel you to waste Christian blood in these times when the land is threatened from every side. Massoud is curbed, aye. But Damascus threatens, Homs threatens, Emessa threatens, Babylon of Egypt

threatens. No, Monseigneur, it was our thought that Sinan will sell to anyone for his price."

"You well know I lack gold to satisfy that ancient leech," the King protested sullenly.

The hard black eyes were focused carefully over Amalric's shoulder.

"A loan might be arranged," the Templar suggested. "In such a cause, my Order—"

"On what security?" snapped Amalric.

"There are fiefs vacant which we might garri-son to the benefit of all of us."

"And win me the resentment of the Hospitallers," jeered the King. "Remember, Master, the rule of your Order demands humbleness. Would you grow rapacious at my need?"

The Templar bowed his head.

"I shall take heed my confessor administers discipline to my pride," he answered meekly. "It was but a thought, Monseigneur."

"Do you of your Order fear Sinan?" demanded Swain.



THE Templar darted a look of hatred at him—Swain never again had doubt of how he stood in that quarter—but the man's meekness was undisturbed.

"We are not permitted to fear Antichrist," he evaded. "When the day comes—"

"You and your knights will be dead on some stricken field, betrayed by Sinan," rasped Swain. "Answer me, aye or nay. Will you aid me to uphold the Kingdom's honor, your King's honor, your Order's honor? I say naught of my own, for that I am able to uphold by my lone."

The Templar controlled himself with an effort.

"You are a stranger from a far land, Messer Swain," he said. "You have yielded good service to Christ's cause. Yet you cannot know the dangers of this land as do we who dwell lifelong here—and, it may be as you say, must perish for it. Sinan is like a money-changer holding the scales; he tips the balances as he wills. If he tips them against us, the Holy Land must suffer, also we, the land's servants. I bid you, as I have the King, consider how he may be bought to give up the Queen."

"And Andronicus and Olvir?"

"They are Satan's prey. Why be disturbed for them?"

Swain laughed harshly.

"As it chances, they are mine," he said. "Get you to your prayers, Master."

The Templar's hand groped for his sword-hilt, dropped as Amalric stepped forward.

"Swain, Swain, you who have been my friend," he exclaimed, "do not heap trouble on trouble for me! The Orders are my right and left arms in the Kingdom's defense. They share my responsibility. If I might forget that, and the oath I swore on my Crown, I would ride with you as a simple knight. Now, I beseech you, let this issue pass. We will have



The Master of the Templars darted a look of hatred at Swain, but his voice remained suave.

Masrouf watched. Goulbain has spies. Andronicus is restless. When he moves we will take him."

"Do you forbid me to keep my oath?" Swain asked.

"I, come betwixt a man and his oath?" cried the King. "God forbid!"

Swain strode across the trampled sward to where the True Cross shone loftily above this last scene of bickering, selfishness, intrigue and vanity as It had shone above the daylong carnage which had lifted men for a brief moment to an ecstasy of selflessness. Of all the host It had swayed to this near approach to divinity, only the two mailed priests gave company to It now. It stood there lonely in the fading light—lonely, yet brightly competent, austere but welcoming. Swain was strangely moved.

Am I fey, he thought to himself? Can it be the Norns I hear calling down the wind? Or is it in truth the White Christ's self? Heh, Asleif's son, we shall know soon; but doubt not a warrior like Him would not suffer me to die before Olvir, let be Andronicus!

He bent his knee before the mystic symbol, which, in men's belief, had borne the mortal body of the Savior. He bared Skullbiter, and thrust it upright in the ground.

"Hear me, Jesus, Mary's son," he said earnestly in Norse. "I am not sure I am a good Christian. I am Swain Asleif's son. My mother was a good woman, and she lit amany candles for Your Mother. She taught me to keep my oaths and promises. I have been the bane of more men than I could count on my housecarles' hands, but I slew them all in honor.

"My friend, Amalric, has been dishonored by two foul niddings who have ravished his sister. I have sworn on Skullbiter, here, to take her from them. I swear now before this True Cross on which You hung that I will keep my oath or perish. And if it be Your will, I will slay Andronicus and Olvir when I do it. Then or later, it does not suffice. Help me, Jesus, Mary's son, for to say truth, the folk in this land of Yours have grown soft, and I need You."

When he stood up the King and Goulbain were beside him. The Master of the Templars was clanking angrily away.

"I knew what you said, Swain, albeit I did not understand," Amalric said. "What can I do for you that I may?"

The jester said nothing, save it be with the warm glow of his liquid eyes.

"It is my thought the White Christ will stand my friend," Swain answered simply, "but if it sets not against your convenience I will take it kindly if you keep my back against the Seljuks. And I would like to borrow Goulbain for his wisdom."

"Goulbain you shall have," replied Amalric. "And I will bide here beyond the marches with the Household and such lords as I can cozen—the Hospitalers will remain in despite of the Templars. Of that you may be sure. What force do you carry with you?"

"Kristin and Grim will come, with the Emperor's folk. They and my carles and Palaeologos' Greeks will be enough to crack Sinan's shell, however tough it be."

"I would I had your confidence, Swain."

The King's voice was sad. Goulbain's bauble jingled a subdued rebuke.

"Confidence, brother? Say, rather, faith—faith in God, faith in faith, faith in self. Not false confidence from stilted ritual, or from false dreams bred by a false drug. But faith, raw faith. Get your faith, brother, and you'll yet be a good King."

"You, who know all you do, say this to a King?" scoffed Amalric. "There's but the one Swain, as I have testified, and the one Goulbain. In other lands, mayhap— But in this Holy Land of ours we brew jealousies as false as hashish."

He checked himself, and dropped to his knees.

"I commit blasphemy!" he exclaimed sorrowfully. "Swain, you have lessoned me. Blasphemy in the presence of the True Cross!

Goulbain, send my squires to arm me. The King of Jerusalem shall do penance this night by performance of his duty. Who else should guard the Cross if men forget it in the zest of victory?"

CHAPTER XI

THE LAND OF DEVIL-WORSHIPERS



SWAIN sat his horse, with Kristin, Goulbain and Palaeologos, at the head of the narrow, winding pass which had led them to the threshold of Sinan's evil domain. Masrouf, itself, stood forth in sinister and pearly beauty on the far side of the fertile valley which unfolded at their feet. High as they were, yet they must crook back their necks to peer upward at its faerie bulk, wall on wall, turret on turret, climbing the summit of its isolated peak to the pile of courts and buildings, where, Goulbain said, the Old Man of the Mountain dwelt in a splendor beyond that of kings and sultans. In the clear mountain air they could even see the windblown spray of fountains drifting over the tree-tops of hidden gardens. But not a trace of human life, not so much as a sentry on the walls, was visible. The neat villages and farms, the fields and orchards, linked by silvery ribbons of water in the open valley, were equally desolate.

"Strange!" exclaimed Swain. "Not a living creature have we seen these past two days. Not a dog has barked to herald our coming."

"Be sure Sinan could have attacked you had he wished to," Goulbain answered. "And at advantage. He chose, rather, to frighten our folk."

"I am not frightened," Kristin said frankly, "but this lonely beauty makes me shiver as though I fronted the North wind in my shift. Where are the Assassins folk? Those fields are apt for harvest, and the fruit hangs yellow in that first orchard. Who tends the water? Never have I seen crops so amply watered."

Swain smote his thigh.

"Water! Aye, Kristin, there you have touched the chink in Sinan's mail. Water he must have, and he'll not draw it atop of yon peak. It must come to him from outside, from some mountain foss. John, your folk are learned in the handling of water. How would he contrive?"

"Why, for the valley farms, that would be simple," Palaeologos replied. "It was a question only of digging ditches, and leading the stream into them." He knitted his brows. "But for the castle, for Masrouf, he must have what our engineers call a syphon, a water tunnel, with a half-loop in it, into which the stream rushes with such force—from a fall, belike—that it is pushed to the summit of the mountain. You have seen the aqueducts of Constantinople, Swain. It is by the same law that their water is lifted over the hills it must pass."

"So if we cut his water tunnel, Sinan's folk would thirst," Swain exulted. "As they must starve, if we destroy their crops. Ho, Goulbain, it is in my mind that we have found a weapon stronger than our arms!"

"It would take you to find it, Swain," the jester answered smilingly. "But this tunnel will be cunningly hid. First, you must plot its course."

"We'll find it," Swain promised. "Heh, I'll set Loge the task. If he be not so good a sorcerer as he claims, I'll ruin his trade in spells."

The walls of the pass re-echoed the clattering of hoofs as Sir Olvard rode up, leading the Hunnish archers and a troop of turcopuli the King had lent Swain. The old knight's eyes were starry-bright with the spirit of adventure.

"Ho, Swain," he called, "this promises a rich tale for the sagamen. Grim and the rest of the folk will be here by sunset, saving they lose no more cartwheels. What's next to do?"

Swain leaned out from saddle and gave him a bear's hug.

"Old stout heart, who of us will be so forward when his beard is white? Get you forward, and try if those skullis are as empty as they seem. Find us a secure village for bedding the night."

Sir Olvard's sword flashed from its sheath. His eagle glance raked the soaring pinnacles opposite.

"I would rather see Sinan humbled than take Massoud himself," he said. "So that is Masrouf! Ever I have longed to see it close, to shame the Templars for their trucking merchantry, aye, treason, with Sinan. This is the best venture I have fared since I came out of Iceland. Ho, it is good to be alive, Swain!"

They camped that night in the largest village under Masrouf. Its houses and barnyards, like all those on the valley floor, were deserted of life; not even the furnishings had been left. But in every house there was an altar beneath a painted semblance of a fiendish creature, half-animal, half-human, cloven-hoofed, claw-fingered, horned and tailed. Goulbain studied these with interest.

"This explains much that I have heard," he said. "I knew the people of the valley were not Assassins, but they are Devil-worshippers, which would import them to be no less under Sinan's influence than his hashish-eaters." He crossed himself. "If there be, in truth, a Hell, then are we at its gates, Swain."

Swain yawned and stretched.

"Whoever is their god, I care not," he returned. "They feed Sinan, that is enough for me. But I never feared this Devil and his Hell, any more than I did the Old Gods or the White Christ. It has been my thought that the Gods must have little use for a man who is afraid of them."

The jester tossed his bauble in air, shifting in a breath from grave to gay.

"As my Brother Amalric has said, you lesson me, Swain," he laughed. "I would I could be as sure as you of all that's meant by life and death." And of a sudden, grave again, "I have known amany men brave of their bodies, but parlous few were brave of those things they could not touch and feel."

Swain yerked him in the ribs with Skullbiter.

"You say so, my parti-coated brother, you who toy with death as no berserk I've ever fought! Goulbain, there's no man save you could outface Sinan as I shall."

"Belittle him not, Swain," the jester urged. "What of the guards?"

"They are tripled, more for their own confidence in this abode of wickedness than because I fear Assassins' knives."



THAT night, indeed, Swain's confidence was justified. In the morning, he set himself to casting a loose-strung web of steel around the castle. Then he rode out to survey the castle and the valley at close hand. The mystery of the valley folk was soon solved. The foot of the castle peak was girded by a massy wall, above which the mountain's sides were terraced and planted. It was here the Devil-worshippers and their livestock had sought refuge, as was testified by the bleating of sheep and mooring of cattle grazing amongst the thick growth of trees. But not a man was to be seen, despite that Swain's party rode up to the main gate. Masrouf towered into the sky, beautiful in its strength, repellant in its suggestion of evil unspeakable—and utterly silent.

The source of the valley's water was also simple to discover. The ditches were fed by a turbulent stream which foamed out of a gap in the northern mountain barrier; but the Greek engineers were certain this lacked the thrust to force its way to Masrouf's peak. Far up some one of the darksome defiles opening off the valley floor, there must be a powerful cataract which Sinan's folk had trapped into a tunnel underground. Uncover it? In time, mayhap, if trenches were dug around the mountains' circuit. Swain dismissed them impatiently, and summoned Loge.

"Here's a test for your sorcerer's skill, dwarf," he said, and explained the engineers' report. "Find me this tunnel, and you name your reward. Fail me, and you'll not filch another ducat or byzant from one of us."

Loge, who had gone gray with Swain's first words, rapidly regained his composure.

"Why, this should not be so difficult as you might think," he answered. "It chanches one of my magics is a water magic. Aye, many a farmer has dug his well by my sorcery. I make no promises," he added hastily, "but if Sinan's magic be not too strong, I'll tap his secret. To say truth, my sorcery has waxed amain since we quit the Holy Land. That was

an ill place for spells devised for the Old Gods."

"It will go ill with your pouch and comfort, if you fail me," Swain rasped grimly. "Get you to your business."

He watched with concealed amusement while Loge swaggered to a tree beside a ditch, and after critical examination, cut himself a forked branch, which he proceeded to peel deliberately, his lips muttering a ceaseless repetition of clicking Lapp syllables as he worked. Swain had never been too sure about Loge's sorcery. Bytimes it worked; bytimes it didn't. Swain was inclined to favor the belief that it stemmed more from a shrewd knowledge of the nature of men, and a skill for heeding what was toward, rather than from occult divination of the Old Gods' purposes or influence over their undoubted powers. But he wasn't sure.

"Attend the dwarf, Bitling, you and some others," he bade Eric. "Keep him safe from the Assassins, but send me word if he seems to be for tricking us with that slippery wit of his."

Eric, for all his baiting of Loge, had more faith in him than Swain, and eke an affection for him, such as a man does feel for one who has kept his back when a shieldwall was broken.

"What Loge promises craftily, that will he perform," he asserted loyally. "Save it be there is a mightier sorcery countering his."

He hurried after the solitary figure, pacing slowly along under the mountain wall, the forked stick held waist-high, eyes fixed on the ground.

Swain returned to a cleared space in front of the gate in the castle's lower wall, where the Greek engineers were erecting an earthen palisade and fitting catapults and mangonels together. Greek footmen, too, were piling boulders and weighty tree-trunks for missiles for their engines.

"When they are ready, bid them batter down the gate," Swain said to Palaeologos. "But that is all."

Presently, the winches of the engines creaked and whined, as the great casting-beams were wound down. The engineers took their sights, regulating the tautness of the hempen cables on the winding-drums. Men armed with mallets took position beside the cogged ratchets, and at a nod from Palaeologos knocked them free. The casting-beams swung up in a quarter-arc, hurling their missiles at a speed a man's eye scarce could follow. The gate quivered and groaned, sagged on its hinges. But not an arrow from Masrouf responded to the challenge. There was no response even when the leaves of the gate were at last torn apart and collapsed upon the ground, exposing a white road which climbed crookedly up the terraced mountainside between leafy groves and orchards heavy with fruit. Nor was there yet a sign of life.



Swain strode up to the iron-studded portal and rapped on it with the hilt of Skullbiter. "Ho, Sinan!" he called. "Swain of the Orkneys is here! I summon you to yield to me the Queen Theodora, the Caesar Andronicus and Olvir Rosta."

Swain frowned, perplexed. He hailed the Varangians.

"Ho, carles! Shields to chins, bare steel. We'll try how these Assassins can stand to their own defense."

Grim and Goulbain ranged themselves beside him. When Kristin would have followed he waved her back.

"Not you, my Queen. I'd as soon take you into the lair of Fenris-Wolf. Bide here with my folk, and the cataphracts, and come to us if I call."



THE trampling of their feet resounded between the gate-towers. Within the walls the trees moved gracefully in the pleasant wind. The cattle and sheep had disappeared.

The road stretched empty before them, ending in a second wall halfway to the summit. And high, high over all, the bulk of Masrouf reared its turrets skyward.

"Here, you might think, men should find peace," Goulbain murmured.

"Peace? Never!" scorned Swain. "This place was built by trolls, who sought to belittle men."

He sent troops of the Varangians right and left to scour the wood, and the column resumed the march. So they reached the gate in the upper wall, and still no man had challenged them.

Swain strode up to the iron-studded portal and rapped on it with the hilt of Skullbiter.

"Ho, Sinan!" he called. "Swain of the Orkneys is here! I summon you to yield to me the Queen Theodora, the Caesar Andronicus and the outlaw Olvir Rosta."

His words boomed back at him from the portal arch, hollow and distorted. Thrice he repeated his demand, and thrice he received no answer.

"The ill carle fears us," he said, with satisfaction. "Heh, I know a way to lay him aboard. Grim, do you and half your folk lie in the wood and watch the gate. The rest I'll leave below."

He turned to retrace his steps—and a gust of mocking laughter spilled like wind from a sail out of the air they breathed, out of nowhere as it seemed. Such laughter as no man there had ever heard, as if ten thousand fiends laughed together over a secret too hideous to phrase in words. It stopped as abruptly as it had begun.

"So laugh the damned!" exclaimed Goulbain, and the iron-nerved Varangians looked startled, one at another.

Swain peered upward over his shoulder at the vacant wall.

"Phaugh," he said. "The damned can never laugh through a shieldwall or quench with laughter a pot of the Greek fire. Be at ease, carles. Sinan may frighten Templars with his tricks, but not Norsemen."

Eric was waiting at the lower gate for him, tense with excitement.

"His spells mastered Sinan's, Swain," the little man babbled. "Never saw I the like! Of a sudden, do you see, the twig shivered and bent, aye, like any green maiden, arching her neck for a buss. And when Sinan's spells fought his, and he weakened, the twig rose up again in cold disdain. But so soon as he put strength into his magic the twig bent humbly as before. Magic, it was black magic! Never saw I—"

"Do you speak of Loge?" Swain interrupted him.

"Who else? I tell you, he—"

"Make sense of it, Bitling! Would you have me believe the dwarf does not boast idly of his sorcery?"

"Aye, so! His spells have carried him nigh the mountain's foot. As he advanced, he bade us plant wands in the ground to mark the water's course."

Swain grinned, tugging at his beard.

"By the Hammer!" he swore. "Can it be the Old Gods have not lost their power, after all? And if that be so, and they aid us, why, nonetheless do they aid the White Christ! Heh, mayhap a man should pay respect to all Gods who are friends to him. But we'll leave that to the priests to settle, Eric. Take me to Loge. I'll not believe in his sorcery save I see it with my own eyes."

They met Loge, sweating happily and taking a long pull at a wineskin one of his guardians held respectfully for him. When he saw Swain his shoulders slumped in an affectation of weariness, and he gestured casually toward a line of wythes extending from the base of Masrouf to a cleft in the mountain wall which was choked with boulders.

"A sore stint you set me, Swain," he mumbled, as one exhausted. "But it is finished. The spells Sinan flung against me sapped the marrow from my bones, but each time I called upon the Gods for aid, and my sorcery prevailed—aye, despite that you would have me bide overlong in Jerusalem, exposed to the art magic of the Christian priests."

Swain strove for sternness.

"The Christian priests do not hold with sorcery or magic," he answered. "You would not think to cozen me, dwarf? No? Then show me how you wrought."



LOGE raised the forked branch in his hands, and extended it before him. In outward seeming, it was no more than a stick of wood, stiff and unyielding.

"So," he said, and shambled at his bowlegged gait to the line of wythes, muttering indistinctly. The moment he reached one of the wythes, the fork became agitated. Its tip started to dip toward the ground, lower and lower.

"You see?" Loge sighed. "My sorcery still

prevails. Here is your water-tunnel, Swain. Dig, and you will find it."

Swain dealt his back an affectionate buffet. "Whether we find it or no, you shall not suffer for it," he promised. "And in truth, you have struck upon a line which bears out the testimony of the Greeks. That cleft—"

He glanced from the cleft up at the remote battlements of Masrouf, so remote that figures would have been invisible even at this close range. An object twinkled fleetingly in the slanting rays of the sun just sinking behind the western peaks. Swain reacted by instinct. He caught Loge to him, and covered the Lapp with his slanted shield. The arrow, driving with terrific force from the height, pinged on its curved surface and was deflected at an angle, burying itself to the fletches in the earth.

Swain roared with laughter.

"Sinan has spoken," he cried. "Ho, Loge, there's surer testimony to your sorcery than the Greeks'. Closer to the mountain, carles. The closer, the safer."

It was in the darkest hour of the night that Goulbain wakened Swain. One look at the jester's seamed face and sorrowful eyes, and Swain bounded to his feet.

"Kristin? Grim?" he demanded, belting Skullbiter.

"Sir Olvard—he slept outside their door. I know not what roused me, Swain. It was as if—as if God whispered in my ear."

"Too late," growled Swain. "But why was I not warned? Sinan's work?"

"Whose else?"

"How could an Assassin pass our guards?"

The jester shook his head.

"It may be he was garbed as one of Olvir's men," he suggested. "In the dark our people might well be fooled."

They ran through the night at speed. Already the village was astir with the clinking and jangling of men donning armor. Eric, Loge and John Palaeologos joined them on the way. Kristin and Grim were waiting at their door, Kristin stormy-eyed, Grim's features a mask of repressed fury.

"He died to save us," she said, level-voiced. "My father's daughter would not have had it so."

"We slept through it, Swain," Grim added. "I know not how. When Goulbain found him his back was to our door."

"He would have wished it so," Swain answered, and pushed by them.

The flaring light of torches showed Sir Olvard sitting propped against the wall by an open door. His eyes were wide in death. One hand clutched the hilt of the dagger in his hand.

Swain stooped down, and saw that the blade was driven through a piece of parchment. He gently detached the stiffening fingers, drew the dagger from the wound and lifted the parch-

ment. It was covered with writing in Arabic.

"Sinan speaks a second time," he commented dryly. "What make you of it, Goulbain?"

"Aye, Sinan speaks," rejoined the jester after a quick scan. "And in words most positive. Heed this:

"Sinan, Lord of Death, Master of the Assassins, Keeper of the Gates of Paradise.

"To:

"Swain, the Wanderer from the North, who dwells at the Court of Jerusalem.

"You have come, uninvited, to my Castle of Masrouf. You have disturbed my people. You have annoyed my Celestial Person. I did not seek to stay your coming hither, albeit I knew every stage of your progress, trusting that the Light of Wisdom might kindle your intelligence. Now, my patience has reached an end. I do not buy peace, I sell it. My one reward for my enemies is the boon of death. It shall be yours if you tarry."

"So much for Sinan. Now, Swain speaks—and acts," rasped the Orkneyman. "Grim, I would have you send certain of your engineers, with all the men they require, to uncover the water-tunnel Loge found. The catapults are to be moved up to the inner gate. All our folk are to be armed and ready for battle. The cataphracts will bide here, lest Sinan has some secret way of coming against us. Kristin will command them." He stooped,



Suddenly Loge's forked stick became agitated and its point started to dip to the ground.

and cradled Sir Olvard's huge frame in his arms. "Show me a couch for this ancient steel-eater. I hope there be others at the White Christ's board will not be slow to pass him the bragging-cup. The oldest of us, and the first to fall! Ho, I wonder will the Valkyrs suffer him to pass to Heaven." He brushed aside the heavy beard and kissed the cold lips. "Aye, Heaven, Paradise or Valhalla, all the Gods must have risen to greet you, Olvard. Drink deep, old friend. Skoal!"

CHAPTER XII

SINAN'S TEMPTRESSES



THE gate in the inner wall was breached by dawn, and the sun was no more than masthead high when the Varangians reached the rock-hewn moat before the castle's outer defenses. Swain was wary of an attack, and kept his men in the shelter of the terraced groves, chopping clearings for the catapults. But not a head appeared on the lofty battlements. Sinan's stronghold might have seemed as deserted of life as it had from the valley floor, but for the restless plaints of confined animals, and an occasional hint of voluptuous music which roused vague longings and misgivings in the hardy Norsemen's breasts. Whenever they paused in their work they peered stealthily at the tremendous structure overshadowing them, almost as though they expected it to collapse upon them, or mayhap, crumble into dust. Its very solidity seemed unreal. Troll-built, Swain had said, they muttered, one to another. Aye, so!

"Have you seen, Swain?" asked Eric. "There is neither bird nor bee in these woods—and grubs and flowers aplenty."

Loge came running through the trees before Swain could answer.

"We have found it," he cried. "The water-tunnel, Swain! The Greeks have laid it bare."

Swain regarded him soberly.

"Then you are, in truth, a sorcerer of sorts," said the Orkneyman. "Tell me, dwarf, how stands your sorcery today? Can it match Sinan's terrors?"

Loge wiggled uncomfortably. He was doing a huckster's trade in charms and spells on the strength of his exploit, and looked for more revenue to come.

"Why, to say truth, Swain," he confessed, "my sorcery cannot magic things into being. It can only divine for me where they are, and perchance, at need, give protection to carles who make it worth my while. How can I measure my sorcery against Sinan's? I am but a small sorcerer, while he must have all the Powers of Evil at his beck."

Swain laughed.

"A small sorcerer! Will you persuade me

you are honest, Loge? Do you hear him, Goulbain? It seems I must match Sinan with my own sorcery, alone, saving you can aid me, jester. Aye, betwixt us it might well be we could out-magic the Old Man of the Mountain, seeing there is naught small in our magic."

The jester turned, smiling, from his persistent scrutiny of the battlements.

"It being no less than the loyal service of Mother Wit," he answered. "But you had best call on her, and all other your familiars. Metal gleams above us. Sinan is prodded again into action."

The soft strains of stringed instruments quivered overhead as Swain stepped to his side. The Orkneyman's jaw dropped at the sight which met his eyes.

"Metal?" he gasped. "Gold and silver and fair white flesh! Does this foul knave think to affright us with his bower-women?"

He choked with rage. For here were no mailed men-at-arms, but a bevy of damsels, beauteous beyond belief, who wore not so much as a veil to shield them from the crisp mountain wind atop the great square gate-tower.

Goulbain clutched his arm.

"Laugh, Swain," he snapped. "Sinan would ravish your men to madness, and tempt you to a rash assault. Laugh, I say!"

Swain hesitated, then let out a bellow of forced mirth which rebounded from the castle walls and pealed through the crowded groves. His axe-wielders froze rigid at the unexpected sound. Behind him, Loge's bow-string snicked into notch.

"See, Swain," hissed the Lapp. "Behind the women! That's the Caesar's helm."

"By the Hammer," exclaimed Swain, "you are right, dwarf! Olvir, too. What, do they think to shelter themselves with their master's sluts?" He opened his mouth, thought better of it. "Do you challenge them, Goulbain. It is fitting I should speak to none save Sinan."

"A ripe judgment," agreed the jester. He stepped forth from the grove. "Ho, Caesar," he called, "we are men down here, not rash youths. Bid the Old Man's women to cover or we will slay them in their nakedness. They are no more to us than the bait he intends them to be. And if you and the Roysterer have aught to say, speak quickly."

The women vanished as abruptly as they had appeared. Andronicus, splendid in his golden mail, reared to his full height of seven feet above the battlements; Olvir's squat stature revealed only his bearded face. It was the Roysterer who spoke first.

"Where hide you, Swain? Do you fear to face us?"

Goulbain ignored him, his eyes riveted on the Caesar, who leaned on the machicolations and stared down reflectively at the jester.

"You are a wise man, Goulbain," said Andronicus in his curiously gentle voice. "You must know, if Swain does not, that it would be easier to carry Jerusalem than Masrouf—aye, you might as well think to storm Constantinople."

"Swain makes no idle threats to Sinan," returned Goulbain. "The Old Man knows well what he seeks. Sinan must render up you and Olvir, and the Queen Theodora, or we will make a desert of this valley, and cut off the water upon which Masrouf exists. And while we are doing this, we will batter down and burn the castle, stone by stone."

"Swain is a bad enemy," Andronicus answered reasonably. "But the Lord Sinan is feared by the Emperor, my foolish brother, and by many other princes. He has no reason to fear Swain. If you do not go away from Masrouf tonight, he will lose certain of his powers and you will all die, saving those he reserves for his pleasures."



GOULBAIN brandished his bauble, with a silvery tinkle of bells.

"Words, Caesar," he laughed. "Even I, a jester, defy them. Sinan will render you two to us for death,

and the Queen, safe, or he will cease to live himself, and his Assassins will be no more than a legend for the minstrels to sing about."

"You will never take us," Andronicus retorted.

"Then will Sinan thirst until he burns, and you with him," said Goulbain.

"The Queen—" began the Caesar.

But Olvir snatched the words from his mouth impatiently.

"The Queen!" he howled. "You are wearied of that pale wench! There is toothsome game in store for you. As for these folk, they know but the one argument."

He whipped up a javelin, and let it drive full at Goulbain's middle. But Swain had been watching from cover. He darted forward, plucked the shaft from the air as it sped, and hurled it back at the Roysterer, even as Loge loosed a shaft at the Caesar's throat. Both were too late. Swain's enemies had dropped instantly behind the parapets with a rousing clang of armor.

"You understood what they would have offered?" Swain panted, dragging Goulbain after him into the grove.

"The Queen? Aye. Mayhap I should have tried them farther."

"Never! For once I hold with Olvir. By all the Gods who've toyed with me, I'll take that pair or"—his fingers twitched convulsively—"we'll put the catapults to work," he finished. "The Greeks must be hewing at the water-tunnel to have driven Sinan to yield so much. Water! Men drown in it—and perish without it." He chuckled, of a sudden good-humored.

"Aye, of all the Gods, Ran stands my friend!"

That night was bright with stars, but soon their radiance was dimmed by the ruddy glare bathing the walls of Masrouf. The fire-pots, tossed up by the catapults like newborn comets in the darkness, vomited gusty torrents of flame the instant they were shattered against earth or stone. Dense clouds of oily black smoke poured up from courts and buildings, mingling an acrid stench with the aromatic odors of burning woods. The livestock sheltered in the castle were driven frantic by pain and fear. But no other sounds came from Masrouf. Its solid bulk loomed over the smoke and flames, seeming more gigantic than in the daylight, more aloof, more contemptuous of this assault upon its strength.

At Swain's suggestion, the Greek engineers varied the fire-pots with huge boulders, which crashed into roofs and buildings behind the walls. He was not concerned with battering the castle's outer walls. His purpose was to wreak damage inside their circuit, to make Sinan and his folk uncomfortable.

"Eric has bidden the engineers to break the water tunnel at daylight," he explained to Goulbain. "They are softening the stonework with the Greek fire. It will be easy for their picks. When Sinan beholds his water spurting into the valley he will be like a man watching the blood drain from his veins. Ho, what are those three nidders to him now they have lost their usefulness? You will see."

The jester assented doubtfully.

"Yet this has an ill-seeming," he said. "His refusal to make active defense."

"What can his dough-faces do against men awake?"

"They can kill even as they are killed," rejoined Goulbain. "The virtue of their drug is that they are ignorant of fear."

"We are too many for them," scoffed Swain.

But he was impressed when the morning brought report of a score of Assassins slain in the night, and half as many of his own folk lost in resisting their blind attacks. It was evident that Masrouf had secret exits, and Swain sent a force of Greeks to traverse the valley in search of them.

Daylight also revealed that the fires in the castle had been curbed, and the place was so vast—more like a town than a castle, as Loge said—that only the outermost buildings had been damaged. Swain directed the foremost tier of engines to continue hurling stones, while the engineers dismounted those in the second tier, and moved them closer to the walls under the protection of a bulwark of trees felled by the Varangians. Then he rode around the mountain with Goulbain to watch the breaching of the water tunnel.

Even from the lower slopes, the Greeks on the valley floor looked to be of the bigness of ants, and the ditch in which they labored no

deeper than a ploughshare's furrow. Swain glanced up at Masrouf; he was certain Sinan lurked at some loophole in the walls, and puzzled momentarily over the hidden policy of the Lord of Death. It might be, he reflected, that Sinan thought to lull his attackers into the overconfidence which often besets men who find their enemies timid. He reached a quick decision. But, in the very moment he turned to Goulbain, a roar as deafening as the thunder of an avalanche boomed through the quiet valley. A thick column of water shot up from the trench the Greeks had dug, and hung in air, spewing from its frothy summit the struggling bodies of the men who had loosed its power.

"This will rouse Sinan to action," cried Swain. "Ride at speed, Goulbain. Fetch up the Cretans, the cataphracti, any folk we have at hand."

Goulbain, startled, withdrew his attention from the awesome spectacle below.

"By the Mass!" he exclaimed. "That is like to be true."



THE jester spurred off on his errand, dodging amongst the trees. Swain followed, the ceaseless roar of water ringing in his ears. But this noise diminished as he put the mass of the mountain betwixt himself and its source. He was not surprised, when he gained the road, to hear a faint clamor of voices above him, and to catch the distant glimmer of sunlight on steel. Yet no man could have been more bemused than was Swain by the struggle awaiting him on the upper terrace.

The Varangians, shield locked to shield, were slowly giving ground before the thrust of a heavy column pouring across the castle's drawbridge. And it needed only a single look for Swain to realize that these dauntless warriors of Sinan's were women. Their mail shirts covered the left half of their bodies, diagonally from shoulder to thigh. Their long hair waved under peaked helmets. They carried short, curved swords and round steel shields, and they wielded their weapons skillfully, gliding to close quarters beneath the reluctant blows of the Varangians' axes. Tavern wench! Swain cursed. These women had been taught to fight.

Grim ran to meet him.

"Will the Emperor's Guard suffer Sinan's bower-women to defeat them?" Swain snarled angrily.

"You should see their eyes, their faces," Grim panted. "They look at you as if they did not see you, yet their blows strike true. There is not so much as a sigh from them when the axes bite home."

"Bid your carles to hew more lustily," snapped Swain. "Aye, they are women, but not such women as Norsemen would bed with.

They are bewitched, tools of this evil ancient we must crush."

Grim hesitated.

"But they are women," he persisted. "And of a beauty—"

"Get you to the catapults," growled Swain. "Bid the engineers cast short for the drawbridge. I'll stay this devil's get." His anger dissolved in a chuckle. "Ho, if Kristin heard you! I would I had her here to lead. Be off!"

He bared Skullbiter, and wedged his horse into the Guardsmen's close-packed ranks.

"Would you let Sinan trap you with his foul spells?" he cried to them. "Forget these folk have women's shapes! Your women would tear them to shreds." Great, humid, glassy eyes stared into his; a sword flicked shrewdly at his shield. He slashed down ruthlessly at the ivory-tinted, rounded shoulder. "See, carles, Skullbiter has no respect for them. Slay them—or be slain! Follow Swain, Varangians!"

The Varangians rallied to him instantly, sensing his spirit as they had mistrusted Grim's. Their shields pressed the women back, their axes swung remorselessly. The catapults commenced to drop stones in the supporting ranks, and Swain was swift to note the tightening of the drawbridge chains.

"Sinan abandons his spawn," he shouted. "Now, give them mercy—if they'll take it."

The drawbridge creaked up, spilling the live and the dead into the moat; but the women refused to halt their resistance. When they were knocked off their feet they plucked knives from their girdles and stabbed themselves, rather than yield. Slippery as eels, they flung themselves into the moat after their sisters if the Norsemen pried the knives from their hands. Not one was taken.

Grim's black mood was still on him, and his Varangians were in like case as soon as the blood madness passed from them. They sat huddled under the trees, staring blankly at the glaring white mass of Masrouf, wrapped again in contemptuous silence. It was Kristin who roused them at last from the spell of foreboding which bound them. She rode up from the valley at the head of the cataphracti, and her coming was like a beam of light after storm.

"Here has been a proud slaying," she exclaimed, swinging down from her horse. "Ha, Sinan's doll-women! Yet it is to be seen how they took with them amany tall carles."

"It sits heavy on our stomachs," Grim answered dourly. "This will not make good talk for the winter nights. I can hear the scalds hailing us for women-slayers."

She laughed.

"You talk as Sinan would have you," she retorted. "Why do you think he sent women against you? First, to seduce you. Second, to weaken your arms. Third, to belittle you. Are you Norsemen, and Christians of a sort, to suffer him so to bewitch you, as he planned?

You do not see Swain befooled by him. Aye, without him, you would have been trapped and beguiled!"

"It goes ill with men such as we to match weapons with women," Grim persisted. "We are not of Olvir's breed."

"When women take the sword, they are no longer privileged as women," Kristin retorted. "What, if I match steel with a man, does that mean he may not strike back at me? I would call that man niddering, and slay him where he stood. Also, these women were not human. They are but semblances of women, working Sinan's foul spells, demons he summoned from Hell."

She shuddered as she stooped to regard one of the beautiful bodies at her feet.

"Aye, there is evil in them, even dead," she cried. "Up, carles, and build a pyre to destroy their flesh. Let Sinan know that he has failed to work his will on you."

They got to their feet, shamefaced as boys caught pilfering a larder. Grim drew a hand across his eyes, and laughed abruptly.

"We have been fools," he said. "You and Swain have the right of it, Kristin. I felt the cold coils of a snake tightening around my heart—aye, as Alti Bard's son must have felt when Magnus Bareshanks sent the adder down his throat."

That night the flames of the funeral pyre challenged the mounting fires within the castle's circuit, kindled anew by the missiles of the creaking, groaning catapults. But the lair of the Lord of Death remained as silent and aloof as it had been, save for the defiance of Andronicus and Olvir and the eruption of Sinan's warrior temptresses.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LORD OF EVIL



THE sun was at half-shadow when Eric trotted up the road to join Swain, Kristin and Grim. He cocked an eye through the leaves at the smoke-stained battlements, and grinned.

"Fire-pots instead of fire-arrows, eh?" he commented. "This puts me in mind of the night we burned Jarl Harald Maddad's son out of his skalli. Blessed saints, send Sinan be as abashed as he was! For to say truth, Swain, if the Old Man thirsts, then we in the valley are like to drown. That water tunnel has the drive of a foss in spring."

"An otter would drown before you, Bitling," Swain retorted cheerfully. "You have gills in your nose. But you are come in good time to join a land onfall. We are going into Masrouf after Sinan so soon as the catapults have battered down his gate."

Eric licked his lips.

"Good hearing," he exclaimed. "It will take a splash of blood to wash the earth off my fingers."

"Hark," cried Goulbain. "That music again."

The languorous twittering of stringed instruments sounded beyond the walls. Gradually it died away. The silence, by contrast, was like the pressure of tremendous hands. Men stirred uneasily, settling their helmets, fumbling at weapons or buckles.

"What bodes?" murmured Kristin.

"Sinan's plays are in train," whispered the jester. "Walk warily, Swain."

"Aye," Grim echoed him. "Shall I order up the archers and slingers?"

Swain shook his head as a voice called thinly from the gate-tower, a high, clear voice, as cold as the icy drip of the glaciers on Hecla's breast.

"Swain! Sinan would speak with the wanderer called Swain."

Swain stepped from the shelter of the trees into the open space in front of the gate.

"I am Swain," he said. "Where is Sinan?"

A cackle of laughter responded.

"You are eager for your years, Swain," the icy voice continued. "I am an old man, a very evil old man, as you know, but I take joy in youth and courage. There is so much more pleasure in shredding them."

"Words," snarled Swain. "Give me more than words or my folk shall shower stones and arrows on your head."

The drawbridge chains commenced to quiver.

"Will you hold truce with me to talk below?" the voice answered mockingly. "Your bowmen can cover this poor husk with their shafts."

"Yes," Swain answered. "But I will slay you if you—"

"We are over-intelligent for such talk, you and I," the voice interrupted. "Bide for me."

The drawbridge clattered down, the steel-barred grill clanked up, the ponderous halves of an enormous door jarred apart. And out of Masrouf's gate came four glassy-eyed men bearing an open litter on which sat a bulbous little figure wrapped in thick white robes. Four other men walked two by two behind the litter. All eight were naked to the waist, and unarmed. Looking past them, Swain could see no other signs of life in the gateway and the court beyond. He walked rapidly to meet the litter in the middle of the bridge.

The little figure threw back its head wrappings. The head was enormous in proportion to the body. The face was draped in layers of fat which blotted out all significance in its contours, save for the small, tight mouth, a hawk nose and the brightest, cruelest, wisest eyes Swain had ever exerted his will to challenge. These eyes held his a moment, battled lustfully to beat them down, then twinkled coldly in sardonic amusement.

"A strong man," proclaimed the icy voice.

"But I expected as much of you, Swain. You entertain me. You make life more satisfying. It is long since I have encountered a man who could make trouble for me. By my Master—and yours—I would like to see how you withstood my Garden of Delights!"

"No Master of yours could be my Master," Swain answered. "What do you seek of me?"

He was conscious of a personality as diabolical as it was merciless in its depraved exercise of powers beyond his understanding. He was not afraid, but he knew that he must bring all the strength of his mind to bear to resist the subtle force of the other's continuous attack.

"Say, rather, what do you seek of me?" the figure responded.

"That you know well," Swain said. "Are you Sinan?"

"I am Sinan, Lord of Death." The figure

laughed without human mirth. "Few men have seen me, and lived to know themselves again."

"Two have been with you," Swain returned.

"It suited me not to bend them to my will. They are most excellent trouble-breeders, and I prosper on the troubles of emperors, kings and sultans."

Sinan had spoken almost lightly, with a touch of demoniac humor. Now he became serious.

"You have hurt my interests as has no other man who came against me," he said. "It will be costly to repair the damage you have wrought. But do not think that you have me in your power. Water? I could exist for a season yet. Break down my walls and you would find stouter walls to resist you. Slay my slaves and I should summon more to slay and be slain. You do not believe me?"

He clapped his hands, and one of the four putty-faced creatures behind the litter stepped forward.

"Paradise awaits you, my son," he said in a level voice, more than ever, Swain thought, like the drip of glacial waters. "Strangle yourself."



Swain was conscious of a personality as diabolical as it was merciless. "I am the Lord of Death," Sinan said. "Say what you seek of me."

Without a word, the creature whipped a thong from his belt, looped it around his neck and wrenched it tight until his eyes popped out and his tongue protruded from his mouth. He toppled into the moat, dead.

Sinai continued in the same level voice.

"If you had brought Greeks against my houris, they would have been crying for more hashish by now. But you Norsemen, you must have snow-water in your veins."

He leaned forward, his eyes once more sparking cold fire into Swain's. Cold? Aye, so cold that it must have numbed Swain's wits had he not summoned his own reserves of will.

"You will not bend," he said, with a hint of petulance. "So we must come to an accommodation. What I can do to satisfy, that will I, Swain. It will not advantage me, any more than it will you, to continue this quarrel."



HE CLAPPED his hands twice, and this time a single slender figure appeared in the gateway. He did not even look around to make certain his command had been obeyed.

"Here is the Queen Theodora," he went on. "If she be not as choice a morsel as when she was brought hither, you—and King Amalric—must blame the Caesar. He is a good trouble-maker, but not a person of much sense, and very fickle by ordinary standards. I have not harmed her."

Somehow Swain believed his statement.

"I shall not hold you to account for her, except as to her person," the Orkneyman answered steadily. "But you know my price, Sinai. What of my two enemies?"

The Master of the Assassins made a gesture of deprecation which was own brother to the bargaining practice of any huckster.

"I had an undertaking with them. No, heed me. Strange as it may seem, I am a man of my word. I promised them protection. I gave them protection. When it became apparent that you had the power of annoying me, I sent them forth by a secret way—which I could use, myself, at need. They are safe out of your reach."

The veins knotted on Swain's temples; his fingers twined around Skullbiter's hilt. But Sinai watched his convulsion of passion, completely unafraid. And again, somehow—why he could not say—Swain credited this inhuman creature.

"Where?" The pent-up breath whistled in Swain's nostrils.

"How can I say?" Sinai shrugged. "Iconium, Damascus, Homs, Emessa? I did not ask. They did not say. But do not mistake me, Swain. They are no longer under my protection, and I shall not protect them in the future. They served my purpose, though not too well, seeing they brought you down upon me."

Swain regained control of himself.

"You split my price, Sinai," he answered

bleakly. "You must make good what you cannot pay in flesh—by promises."

"As what?"

"A pledge not to send your Assassins into the Kingdom of Jerusalem."

"Paid cheerfully." Sinai's thin lips, so out of place in his pudgy face, twitched in soundless laughter. "To say truth, Jerusalem lacks the wealth to be worth my while. The sultans and emirs pay better, and take fright as easily as Christian knights. You have my promise. So long as the Kingdom endures, which I do not think will be long."

"I will come from the ends of the earth, from Furdurstrandi—"

"I do not know Furdurstrandi," Sinai cut him off briskly. "And take my advice, Swain, and do not threaten. That is what I have admired about you—you take action, without threatening. A sound principle. I could wish to enlist your services, but I will not insult you by supposing that you would accept an offer. I regret to have to admit that you have the makings of a good Christian in you, too good a Christian, despite that you may be doubtful of that yourself."

He clapped his hands again twice, and Theodora advanced upon the drawbridge. Swain glanced at her casually—and looked hastily away from the ravaged, mournful face.

"Go before me," he bade her, not unkindly. "Queen Kristin will order your comfort."

"Are you satisfied?" asked Sinai.

"No," Swain retorted fiercely. "Andronicus and Olvir Rosta are enemies I have sworn to slay, and slay them I will! But I will not be the death of good men to punish you after they have escaped. You are my enemy only so far as you harm my friends. Let me have complaint of you, and I will tear Masrouf from this mountain. Keep your promise, and you may work all the evil reckless folk permit you."

Fires flicked in Sinai's slitted eyes.

"If there were more men like you, we Masters of the Assassins—aye, and the Master we serve—would soon perish," he said. "I will tell you a secret, Swain. Evil has power only over those who accept it. But we who accept it without fear, we shall come to have power over all men—when your like are gone."

A shadow of jeering laughter trickled between his lips. "I am still in your debt," he added. "You have lessened me. I must be more vigilant. There is much good to be destroyed."

"Mayhap we shall destroy you," Swain countered.

"Not so. Evil must always exist, else how could men hope to know virtue?"

There was nothing shadowy about that screech of eldritch laughter. Swain felt as though clammy influences pawed at him from the sun-warmed air. He bent his gaze once more to Sinai's, compelling the Lord of Death

(Continued on page 144)

IT HAPPENED

An Off-the-Trail Story

ILLUSTRATED
BY
L. STERNE STEVENS



"Many's the night I wanted to stay in and you made me go along with you," said Copper, putting his leash on his former master. "See how you like it."

SAM FISHER had raised the gun to his temple and was about to pull the trigger and blow his brains out when a voice behind him said quietly, "Don't do it, Sam."

Anyone who has ever attempted to commit suicide knows how distressing such an interruption can be. Sam was no different. He felt angry and embarrassed. He looked around, his lips twitching, his face hot. There was no one in the room except Copper, his police dog. Copper, ears erect and head aslant, was watching him with cool, fascinated eyes.

"Who spoke?" asked Sam. He had taken a few drinks to give him courage for the shooting. His voice was hoarse, as though he'd caught cold.

"I did," said Copper.

"You keep out of this, Copper," said Sam, waving the gun at him.

"Take that gun out of my face," said Copper. "It makes me nervous."

"Makes *you* nervous!" cried Sam angrily. "Makes *you*—"

Then the hand holding the gun fell limply to his side as the wonder of it smote him. His heart began to float and sink like a parachute. Sam looked at Copper, but Copper's eyes were steady. Sam's eyes wavered. He turned his head and saw the whiskey bottle on the table. He reached for it with his free hand and tried to fill a glass. The bottle was empty. Sam dropped into a chair. He was shaky.

TO A DOG

By A. B. SHIFFRIN

"I—I didn't know you could talk, Copper."

"I didn't know it myself, Sam."

"You didn't?"

"No. It just sorta popped out when I saw what a fool thing you were going to do. After all, I've been listening to you long enough. I've picked up a lot of things from you."

"I guess you have," said Sam.

"After all," continued Copper, "what's so hard about talking? Why, even those halfwits you hang around with know how to talk."

Sam stared at Copper. Shivers were going through him. He really shouldn't have been surprised. Copper was a great dog, capable of almost anything. But somehow it had never occurred to him that Copper was good enough for this. Sam's face began to grow bright with fresh hope. He leaned forward eagerly.

"Copper," he said, unable to hide his excitement, "that—that changes everything. Everything!"

"It does?"

"With you talking we can—we can go on the stage, we can go on the air! We can make all kinds of money—"

"Oh," said Copper, "so it's money."

"Well, partly. But with you on the radio, and me managing you—"

"Nix," said Copper. "None o' that."

Sam felt his stomach sag. He looked at Copper sadly. He should have known Copper would take offense at any mention of the mercenary. A strong dog, Copper.

"I guess you're right," Sam said. "None o' that."

"That's cheap," said Copper.

"You're right. That's cheap."

"I have my dignity," said Copper.

Sam could understand this. He laid the gun on the table and then he put his head in his hands. His skull throbbed like a time-bomb. Any minute it would fly into fragments.

Copper was keeping an eye on him. Copper had a great affection for Sam. He owed his life to Sam. Sam had found him with his tongue hanging one hot summer day when he was still



a pup. He was going mad with thirst and Sam got him some water and then took him home and kept him there. It wasn't much of a home but it was a lot better than the gutter or the garbage heaps.

"You know, Sam," he said, "you gave me a real scare just now. It looked for a minute as if you were gonna do me out of my big chance."

"Your big chance?"

"I've been meaning to ask you for a long time, but I just couldn't get the words together."

Copper moved away from the radiator where he had been warming himself. He drew nearer to Sam.

"Why'd you want to do it, Sam?" he asked softly.

"Not for the target practice," Sam answered.



SAM FISHER was a newspaperman. He wrote those little editorials for the *Chronicle*. Not the weighty, column-long editorials that influenced voters and launched

reform movements. Just the small ones about oddities in the news, the prose poems about the first snowfall, the humorous piece about women's hats and their resemblance to vegetables, a paragraph about Brooklyn, always good for a chuckle, and, of course, the legend of the groundhog and its shadow. That sort of thing. Sam should have been writing the long ones, but Sam had no push to him. He let people shove him around. Twitchell at the *Chronicle* shoved him around, and Daisy at the Tavern shoved him around, and Pittsburgh O'Hara shoved him around. Copper used to watch the

way they all shoved Sam around, and he'd never liked it. It was evident that Sam didn't like it either. But what did he do about it? Nothing. He just kept pouring himself a little one from the big one.

"Brother," said Sam, after a pause, "what happened to me shouldn't happen to a dog!—Oh, I'm sorry, Copper. No offense meant."

"That's all right," said Copper broadmindedly. "Tell me, Sam, what happened?"

"When you lose all the money you've saved up," said Sam bitterly, "and then you lose your girl, and then you lose your job—what's left?"

Copper said nothing.

"Oblivion," said Sam, seeing that Copper did not know the answer. "And that's my story."

Copper nodded sympathetically and Sam gave him a few of the details. It began with Daisy. Sam wanted to marry her and Daisy said she'd

take him on, but first he'd have to get some real dough, say five grand—a sum worthy of her position as the singing star of the Tavern. Well, Sam had a whole thousand saved up, but that gave him only a twenty per cent stake in Daisy and he was wondering how long it would take to get the other eighty per cent, when Pittsburgh O'Hara entered the picture. Pittsburgh could spot a guy in trouble faster than



There was no one in the room except Copper, who was watching him with cool, fascinated eyes. "Who spoke?" asked Sam.

gravy spots a shirt. Pittsburgh knew of a romantic hideaway where fellows played cards for relaxation and a chump with a thousand and a little luck could walk out with five thousand, and sometimes it didn't take more than a half hour. So Sam, with Pittsburgh at his side, visited the hideaway, and it didn't even take a half hour. In fifteen minutes Sam walked out—minus his thousand, and his signature on an I.O.U. for another thousand.

When Sam went to tell Daisy his misfortune he found Mr. O'Hara already on the job, consoling her. Daisy had a deep loathing for gamblers—who lost. She made a scene and Sam, who couldn't stand scenes, decided that there was nothing left for him but to get stinko. Which he did—with such success that he neglected to turn in his little editorial on the aurora borealis, and Twitchell, who never neglected anything, did not neglect to fire him.

"That's my story," said Sam. Then he glanced at Copper and shook his head slowly. "Boy, you're lucky. Nothing to worry about—no money troubles, no girl troubles, no unemployment. Just sleeping near the warm radiator all day and dreaming wonderful dreams. What a life!"

"Huh!" said Copper.

"Boy," said Sam enviously, "don't I wish I were in your shoes!"

Copper's ears flopped down like an umbrella and came up again quickly.

"That's funny," he said.

"What's funny?" asked Sam.

"What you just said. Because that's what I've been leading up to. That's what I meant before. All the time you were telling me your troubles I was saying to myself, 'Sam, you sap, what a time I'd have me if I were only in *your shoes!*'"

"In *my shoes!*"

"That's what I was thinking. And it's not the first time."

"No?"

"No. Many's the time I'd be dozing in front of the radiator wishing I were you. Many's the time! That's why I was afraid just now. If you croaked yourself, you'd be doing me out of my big chance." Copper sighed. "Boy, if I were you!"

"Brother," said Sam, "you don't know what you'd be letting yourself in for."

"I'll take the chance."

"If it were up to me," said Sam, "I'd swap places with you right now."

Sam blinked his eyes. Something seemed to be blurring his vision. Copper came close to him and spoke in a voice that seemed queer to Sam.

"You would?" Copper asked. "You mean it, Sam? You would?"

"I sure would," said Sam.

"But you've got to mean it," said Copper, and his voice was low and far-away and Sam could

hardly hear it. He tried to look at Copper but Copper's body was a blurred shape. Out of the blur the dog's eyes shone like stars. "With all your heart and soul," said Copper.

"Sure," said Sam, trembling, "sure I mean it. I mean it with all my heart and soul. Sure I do."

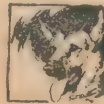
"So do I," said Copper, holding Sam's eyes with his own. "It takes two. It always takes two."

"Two," said Sam sleepily.

"That does it," said Copper. "Two of us. That does it."

"That does it," said Sam.

"That does it," said Copper, his voice growing fainter and fainter until it was only a moan in his throat. "*That does it!*"



"THAT'S funny," thought Sam. He was thinking of the strange sensation at the tip of his spine and he reached around with his left hand to scratch himself. That's when his fingers got hold of his tail and he gave a sharp yelp of surprise. He must have lost his balance at that moment. He felt himself falling and his hands hit the floor with a soft slap. When he tried to get up on his legs he found that it wasn't easy.

Looking up, Sam saw a man standing in front of him and the man smiled and said, "You look all right, Sam. Not in my class, but not bad. Not bad at all, considering."

Sam gazed at Copper with admiration.

"You look swell, Copper."

"Thanks, Sam," said Copper, moving to the door.

"Where you going?" Sam asked quickly.

"Out," said Copper. "I don't know how much time I've got, so I'd better not waste any of it."

"Well," advised Sam, "take care of yourself. Don't do anything I wouldn't do."

"On the contrary, Sam. I'm going to do lots of things you *should've* done. Don't you worry about me. I've been with you long enough to know the ropes. Oh, before I forget, Sam—the window in the kitchen is open. You can hop out for your constitutional any time you feel the urge. Watch your step going down the fire-escape."

"I'll watch out," promised Sam.

"There's an old maple tree I've been partial to, and I think you'll find it'll suit you, too."

"Maple tree," mumbled Sam. "I'll remember."

"When I get back I'll open a can of food for you. I've got a few bones buried near the fence, but I don't want you to touch them unless it's an emergency."

"I won't touch them," said Sam.

"Let's hear you bark, Sam."

Sam barked.

"It'll do," said Copper. "So long, Sam."

"So long," said Sam.

Copper had his hand on the doorknob when

he remembered something and turned around. "Just one more thing, Sam. There's a French poodle in the yard next door. Lay off. She's poison."

"French poodle?" asked Sam.

"Poison," repeated Copper.

"I'll leave her alone," said Sam.

It was noon when Copper approached the office. He felt fine. His eyes were bright and his step was springy. There were moments when he felt like crossing a street in three leaps, but he restrained himself. The world looked good from his upright position. He could see people without having to stretch his neck and roll his eyes. Life was all a matter of perspective. Copper blew into the office whistling—a thing Sam had never done. Everybody stared at him, but Copper paid no heed. He made straight for Twitchell's office, knocked on the door but didn't wait for an invitation to enter. He just entered.

Twitchell was putting the phone down. When he saw who it was he said, "You!"

"Me," said Copper. "Hiya, Twit?"

Twitchell overlooked the "Twit." He was too angry to care. He stood up, pushed his chair away and bellowed, "I thought I told you I didn't want you around here again! I thought I said there was no room on this paper for a boozehound—"

"I'm not a hound," said Copper. "Never was."

"I thought I told you you're fired!"

"I don't want to be fired," said Copper.

"Oh, you don't, eh? Well, how nice! You don't want to be fired—"

"It takes two," said Copper softly, leaning over the desk and looking keenly at Twitchell. "It takes two to fire one. I'm not fired as long as I refuse to be fired. Your part is only half of it and half is not enough. It takes two."

Twitchell shoved his upper plate back into place and shut his lips tight. Then they parted and he spoke one word.

"Drunk!"

"No," said Copper.

"Whiskey!"

"No," said Copper. "Metaphysics."

"You got the gall to come in here drunk—after I fired you!"

"Look, boss. I'm not drunk. Here, smell my breath. . . . See— I'm not. And I'm not fired. We're wasting a lot of good time—and I don't know how much time I've got to waste. Let's get started. What's on for today? What's cooking?"

Twitchell looked at him for a full minute. He had never known Sam to be this way. He was puzzled. He sat down and blew his nose thoughtfully.

"All right," he said at last, in a subdued tone, "all right, wise guy. I'll give you one more chance." Copper couldn't hold back a bark of triumph. "Cut the funny stuff. I don't like imitations. You're not going back to your desk.

You're going back on the beat. I want an interview with Garland. Get it and you're on the payroll again."

"Who's Garland?"

"The millionaire playboy who married a strip-teaser and bought her a boatload of diamonds. You wrote an editorial about it, you dumb cluck, with a moral tagged on, and now you ask me who he is! Take a camera with you and get a few shots. And I don't mind telling you, Sam, if you get into that house you'll be the only one who's done it."

"How come?"

"His doorman is a retired prize-fighter."

"I'll take care of him," said Copper.

"If you're thinking of bribery, forget it. It's been tried by every paper in town. Besides, even if you get by him, there are those two dogs who don't bark."

"Don't bark?"

"No. They bite."

"I'll take care of them," said Copper with a look of smug assurance.

"Sam," said Twitchell, "I don't know what's come over you. For the first time in three years you look like a human being. You get this interview and we'll let bygones be bygones."

"I'll get it," said Copper.



MR. GARLAND lived in a three-story marble-front mansion. Copper rang the doorbell and the man who opened the massive door was a giant with a stepped-on face.

"Yeah?" he challenged.

"Are you Mr. Garland?" asked Copper.

"Naw," said the giant, "I'm Happy—"

"I'm glad somebody is," said Copper, and he tried to push by Happy.

The pug said gleefully, "Oh, so you wanna play. C'm in here," and he allowed Copper to get into the vestibule.

"Put up your dukes!" snarled Happy. Copper didn't know his own strength. He laid Happy out with a single punch.

A door from the vestibule led into the library. That's where Copper met the dogs. When Copper saw them he understood why nobody could get by them. They were champs. But Copper, being something of a linguist, said, "Hi, fellas," in their own guttural dialect, and since they were starved for news of the outside world and hungry for a few good stories, Copper had them eating from his palm in no time at all. He left them laughing heartily over one of his better anecdotes and went upstairs in search of Mrs. Garland.

Copper took a few shots with the camera as he explored the place. On the second floor he came face to face with the millionaire's bride. She was very glad to see a newspaperman. She was practically a captive, she told him, and was glad to see anybody. Mr. Garland didn't want her to see anyone until he had educated her

because, he said, she was only an ignorant burlesque queen.

"I'm just a little guinea pig," she said, pouting.

"Just a little guinea Pygmalion," smiled Copper, but she didn't get it. "It's a pun," he explained.

"Oh," she said sweetly. "Do you want to take some pictures of me?"

This Copper did, and every one was a honey. She knew how to pose. She was on the verge of giving away the secrets of her strip-tease act when Mr. Garland arrived. He was a well-dressed, ordinary looking man.

"How did you get in?" he asked Copper. He wasn't angry. He was just puzzled.

"I knocked out your man Happy," said Copper, "and I had a talk with your dogs. I was just having a talk with your wife, and now I think I'll have a talk with you."

"When you get back to your office," said Mr. Garland, "hand in your resignation. I need a man like you."

When Copper got back to the office loaded down with words and pictures, Twitchell told him he could have the rest of the day off. Twitchell had a queer look in his eyes.

At home Copper found Sam waiting for him. Sam was curled in front of the radiator.

"How'd it go?" asked Sam.

"Great. I got the job back."

"You did?"

"Yeah. Now I've got to get the girl back."

"Fat chance!"

"Then I'm going to get you your dough back."

"Forget about the dough. You start going after dough and the trouble begins."

"And after that," said Copper, "I'll try a few things on my own. Come on, Sam, we're going out."

"Aw, gee, Copper, I'm comfortable. I don't want to go out. I like it here."

"You're going out just the same. C'm'ere, I'll put the leash on you."

"Aw, please, Copper!"

"Many's the night I wanted to stay in and you made me go along with you. Many's the night! See how you like it."

He put the leash on Sam and dragged him out.

The Tavern was a small neighborhood nightclub which Sam used to frequent, and that was where Copper now went. Daisy was just finishing a number and the customers were applauding. As they moved to a table, Copper heard Sam growl and felt him stiffen against his leg. Copper saw that Sam had his eyes glued to a table where a man sat alone. He wasn't alone long because Daisy joined him. Copper recognized the man. It was Pittsburgh O'Hara, and Copper could understand Sam's feelings. This was the tough boy who had tricked him out of his money and stolen his girl. Copper dis-

liked Pittsburgh for reasons of his own. Pittsburgh had once kicked him.

Copper went up to the table. Sam growled.

"Hello, Daisy," said Copper.

"Hello, Sam," she said. "No hard feelings?"

"Plenty hard feelings," said Copper. "Hello, Pittsburgh."

"O'Hara to you, sucker. And get this mutt away from me," snarled Pittsburgh.

"You don't like dogs?"

"No, I don't. And I don't like you, neither, so scram."

"I'm not forgetting," said Copper, "how you once kicked me—I mean, Copper—"

"Yeah, and I'll do it again if you don't get him away from me."

Sam was sniffing at Pittsburgh's trousers. He wanted to take a bite but he was afraid he'd break a tooth.

"Sam," said Daisy, "I don't want no trouble. Better go away."

"Looka that mutt," said Pittsburgh, pointing to Sam. "A refugee from the dog pound, that's



The French poodle was quick to manifest an interest in Sam that went beyond the platonic.

what he is. Just take a look at him. That ain't no dog. It's a rabbit!"

A small group gathered around them and laughed. Sam was a sorry sight, but that was no reason for Pittsburgh to kick him in the face, which he suddenly did. Sam let out a yelp of pain and made for a safety zone. And that's when Daisy had the surprise of her life.

She saw her jilted boy-friend, the non-militant ex-editorial writer, lift O'Hara out of his chair and smite him with a strange but powerful semi-circular punch that looped upwards, pausing for a second to make contact with O'Hara's solar plexus, and then continued on its way to plant an uppercut on his jaw. Pittsburgh stood still, hesitating like a chopped tree before it falls. Then he fell. He was out for a half hour.

That's how it happened that Copper could go out with Daisy and take her home and make love to her, while Sam flopped nearby, watching them sleepily.



"EVIDENTLY," said Sam to Copper when they were alone, "you have something which I lack. You've got a manner, an approach—in short, you've got a way with

you, Copper. Here you are, in one week, rebuilding all I've wrecked. You got my job back—"

"Only I'm doing the work."

"And getting the pay. And you've got my girl back—"

"Only I'm footing the bill."

"And doing the necking."

They were silent for a while.

"Copper," said Sam, "how long is this going to continue?"

"I don't know."

"It—it can't go on forever, you know."

"No, I suppose it can't."

"Something's bound to happen."

"Nothing's going to happen as long as we don't step out of line. The minute we step out of line—"

"I'm beginning to worry," said Sam.

Not that Sam wasn't happy. He liked this life of ease. He felt like a dog who had retired on an annuity. Nothing to do but enjoy himself. Down in the yard he made the acquaintance of the French poodle. She, on her part, was quick to manifest an interest in Sam that went beyond the platonic. Time and again while Copper was busy with Twitchell or with Daisy, Sam would slip down the fire-escape and keep a rendezvous with Fifi. Copper had warned him against the sly coquette, but Sam simply hadn't enough character.

One day Copper got the scare of his life. That was when he returned home and found Sam in convulsions. He couldn't get a word out of Sam and he had to call a vet. The vet diagnosed it as a plain case of fancy poisoning.

He worked on Sam for an hour and when life was restored, Sam confessed that he'd been playing around with Fifi and that Fifi's mistress had objected. It was Fifi's mistress who had tried to bribe him with a hunk of juicy steak, neglecting to tell him that she had soaked it in poison.

Copper was furious.

"I told you not to have anything to do with that French dame!" he roared, and Sam sneaked off with his tail between his legs and hid under the bed. Copper had a cold sweat when he contemplated the fix he'd be in if Sam died. He'd be stuck with Sam's mortal remains and never be able to get back into his own. Not that he wanted to just yet. He was having too good a time. But you never could tell.

A few nights later Copper went to the Tavern alone. He sat at a table waiting for Daisy to finish her number. Pittsburgh O'Hara came up softly and said, "Mind if I park here?"

"Yes, I do," said Copper.

So Pittsburgh sat down. "Look, Sam," he said through his left nostril, "that I.O.U. is something you ought to take care of. The boys are getting impatient."

Copper said nothing. Pittsburgh promptly changed the subject.

"Say," he said, "that was a nice piece you wrote about Mr. Garland."

"I didn't know you could read," said Copper.

"I can't. But I seen the pictures and the boys read the titles. Swell pictures. Say, I guess you know you was about the only guy who could crash the gate into that joint."

"Yeah, I know."

"That was a good stunt, Sam. You see, I tried it myself, but I couldn't get to first base."

"You tried? You mean you wanted to interview him?"

"Her. Not exactly interview. All I wanted was to sorta fondle some of that expensive ice."

"Oh, a connoisseur."

"Nah! Look, Sam, I don't know how you crashed the joint, but if you did it once, you can do it twice."

"Stop taking all the detours. Where you heading for?"

"The dump's abandoned," said Pittsburgh. "Mr. and Mrs., they went to Californy. But they left the ice in the refrigerator."

"How do you know?"

"Look, Sam, we got ways, we got ways. When I tell you they left the ice in the refrigerator, they left it. I wouldn't come and bother you, Sam, only they left that pug behind, and they left the dogs behind, too."

"Are you trying to tell me you're planning to steal the Garland diamonds?"

"Don't be uncouth, Sam," said Pittsburgh. "I mean me and a couple a guys, including the best fence in the business—all we want is a redistribution of worldly goods. Understand?"

"I see. Social work."

"You're getting hep."

"So what do you want from me? You want me to write an editorial in justification of your deed?"

"Hell, no," said Pittsburgh. "All I want is for you to get me into that joint and leave the rest to me. You don't have to do nothing else. Except get your share of the split—maybe a couple a grand, maybe more."

"It sounds intriguing," said Copper. "Here comes Daisy. I'll see you tomorrow and let you know."



FOR the first time since they'd changed shoes, Copper wasn't sure of himself. He felt nervous. He paced the floor around Sam and Sam watched him.

"What's up?" asked Sam, wagging his tail eagerly.

"Aw, shut up!"

"You aren't thinking of stepping out of line?" Sam asked with concern.

"I said shut up!"

Sam retreated. Copper left the house abruptly, without opening a can for Sam. Sam went to sleep hungry.

Copper had a number of reasons for join-



Copper engaged the dogs in conversation and presently he had them in stitches with a few nifties they had never heard before.

ing forces with so eminent a rat as Pittsburgh O'Hara in so shady an enterprise as house-breaking. One reason was curiosity. Curiosity killed a cat, but since Copper's family tree was basically canine, what happened to the cat didn't trouble him. Furthermore, he wanted to see an expert like Pittsburgh at work in his chosen profession. Then, too, there was the chance of scooping a story for the *Chronicle*—the burglary of the year right under his nose—in fact, under his management. And, of course, he'd come out of it with two very important items: the money for Sam and the goods on Pittsburgh.

So he gave the nod to Pittsburgh and the deal was on. The scheme was for Copper to clear the way, after which Pittsburgh would take over. Given the freedom of the house, he could be depended upon not to disgrace himself. They reached the morgue-like mansion and Copper rang the bell. The door opened and he found Happy's face scowling at him.

"Oh," said Happy, "so it's youse again. Dat's fine. Dat's what I been waitin' for."

"Hello, Happy," said Copper.

"Happy?" laughed Pittsburgh. "Hey, what's your first name?"

"Slap," said Copper. "How about it, Happy, can we come in?"

"Put up your dukes," said Happy. So Copper had to lay him out again. With Pittsburgh's assistance he carried the horizontal pug to the library and made him comfortable on the divan.

Pittsburgh wheeled and reached for his gun. Copper caught his arm just in time. The dogs were about to spring.

"I'll take care of them," said Copper. "You go about your business."

Copper engaged the dogs in conversation, and presently he had them in stitches with a few nifties that never reached them in these marble halls. He was enjoying himself when he heard a purring voice behind him and he turned to see Happy, revived from his coma, talking into the telephone. And just then, Pittsburgh, his job done, came into the room holding a heap of glittering stuff which he dangled in front of Copper.

"Look out!" Copper yelled. "He's phoning the cops."

Pittsburgh O'Hara whirled, gun in hand, and let it blaze. The bullet got Happy square in his cauliflower ear and lodged there. He was hurt, but not knocked out. He spun around and when he faced Pittsburgh he, too, had a weapon in his hand. He shot just once and he got Mr. O'Hara right between the eyes, which was quite a stunt because O'Hara's eyes grew very close together. O'Hara didn't say a word. He just fell down dead.

The pug, who was not dead, turned slowly and took aim at Copper who was holding the

dogs back. Copper released them and flung a chair at Happy. The chair didn't touch the man but it spoiled his aim. Copper sprang toward the door just as Happy pulled the trigger a third time. Copper felt a rip in his trouser leg and a burning sting. He limped out of the house just as a police car screeched to a halt. Two cops came piling out, revolvers ready, and there was nothing for Copper to do but to raise his hands to heaven. And, as he did so, he thought suddenly of Sam.

Sam, at that very moment, was having his own troubles, and they were every bit as dark and hopeless as Copper's. The flesh being weak, Sam had defied Copper's warnings and kept still another date with the irresistible Fifi. And Fifi's mistress, observing their amorous dalliance from her window, was determined to nip the misalliance in the bud, once and for all. She had showered Sam with invective, kitchenware and scalding water. She had tried to assassinate him. There was one trick left. She called for dog-catchers. When Mr. Schmootzie arrived, she weepingly told her story. It was a harrowing tale about a stray dog, uncared for and unlicensed, who was annoying her innocent little Fifi. And for good measure, she added that Sam had even attempted to sink his teeth into her calf, he was that vicious. She very shrewdly showed the calf in question to Mr. Schmootzie. The dog-catcher examined the evidence with interest.

"Sure," he said, "we'd better get hold of that beast before he gives somebody the rabies."

Mr. Schmootzie was tall and thin and, from long association with the breed, he spoke with a canine accent. But he was a good man and he knew his business. He laid a trap for Sam with the aid of the fickle Fifi, and Sam, all unsuspecting, walked into it and was hustled into Schmootzie's wagon, where a dozen other assorted captives yowled in dismal complaint at this, their last round-up.



IT WAS precisely at the moment when Sam became a howling member of the chorus in Schmootzie's wagon, that the captured Copper was ushered into the privacy of a Black Maria and whisked away in the direction of the jailhouse. Copper's leg was bleeding and it stung like a snake-bite. The cop who sat beside him tried to cheer him with friendly conversation.

"Moider, dat's what it is," said the cop whose name was Storky. "Looks like you're headin' for da hot seat, buddy. Looks like you're behind the eight-ball all right. One guy dead, other guy maybe dyin'. Looks like you're gonna boin all right. . . . Ain't talkin', hey? You'll talk. When Clancy and da boys gets t'rough wid ya, you'll talk."

The driver of the Black Maria called over

his shoulder, "Hey, Storky, wanna see some fun? Here comes Schmootzie with another load of hydrophobia. I think I'll give the guy a scare."

With which words he gave the wheel a slight flip and almost crashed head-on with the oncoming vehicle driven by Mr. Schmootzie. The dog-catcher swerved in the nick of time. Storky and his pal roared with pleasure, as became cops with a sense of humor. Mr. Schmootzie, on his part, wiped a layer of hot sweat from his brow.

Precisely at the moment when the two government vehicles kissed fenders, a curious thing happened. Sam in one and Copper in the other were each stricken with keen regret. Each of them suddenly wished himself back in his former and natural state, no matter how dull and hopeless that state might be. For each of them knew that only thus could he escape the dire fate that was awaiting him—the hot seat for one, the lethal chamber for the other. Each of them wished and prayed with all his frightened heart and sorrowing soul that he were back in the shape and form and the life he'd been born to, and a voice from deep down inside of each of them rose in a pitiful cry.

And thus it was that Mr. Schmootzie, just recovering from the shock of the near-collision, heard a man's voice yelling, "Let me out of here! Let me out of here! Let me out or I'll sue you for every cent you've got!"

Schmootzie stopped the wagon and looked in and there, surrounded by the howling dogs, was a man! Never in all his years of dog-catching had he ever caught a man! His face turned yellow. He rushed around to the rear and hastily opened the door to let the man out.

"You idiot!" cried Sam. "You blundering fool! I've a good mind to have you arrested."

"B-b-but how did you get in?"

"You put me in, you fathead! You put me in when I wasn't myself. If that's your idea of a joke—"

Mr. Schmootzie's mouth released a waterfall of apologies.

"I don't understand it," he muttered unhappily. "I don't understand it. In twenty-two years of service to this community this is the first time—"

Then he let out a cry of dismay. "Look! Look what you made me go and do! Look what you made me go and do!"

What Sam had made Schmootzie go and do was to leave the door of the wagon wide open and the assorted dogs, every single one of them, had taken it on the lam.

Storky was finishing his roar of laughter and wiping the tears from his eyes when he heard a sound that made his blood freeze. He turned to examine his prisoner and he saw a big police dog glaring at him.

"Stop!" yelled Storky. "Stop the car!"



Fifi's mistress told a harrowing story to Mr. Schmootzie, and the dog-catcher examined the evidence with interest.

There was terror in his voice and the driver brought the Black Maria to a quick screeching stop.

"What's eating you, Storky? What's the yelling for?"

"Look!"

The driver looked.

"Who let the dog in?"

"I didn't," said Storky.

"Where's the guy?"

"I don't know."

"You don't know? You drunk?"

Storky shook his head.

"Something's screwy here," said the driver. "Something I don't like. They're waiting for us to deliver the prisoner for questioning. We bring in a dog, they'll break us. They'll say we been on a binge—"

"But we wasn't."

"They'll say we was. They'll frame us. You know them guys. Somebody'll have to take the rap, and it'll be us."

Storky groaned.

"Something screwy here," said his partner. "You sure the guy didn't slip you a bonus so's you'd let him scam?"

Storky reached for his hip.

"Say dat again and I'll—"

"Aw, shut up. I'm in it same as you. Get the mutt out and let's go back and start looking for the guy. He couldn't get far with his game leg."

Sam reached the apartment a little after Copper. He had to stop at a bar and get a drink. It was the first he'd had in a long time. When he got home he found Copper already there, waiting for him.

"Well," said Sam, "here we are back where we started from. It was good while it lasted. But I guess it couldn't last forever."

"We must've stepped out of line," said Copper.

"I guess we must've," said Sam. "Well, it's all over now."

"Sam," said Copper.

"Yes, Copper, what is it?"

"I hate to tell you this, but you're not in the clear yet."

"What do you mean, I'm not in the clear? What have you been doing? You—you haven't gone and lost my job for me again?"

"Worse than that," said Copper. "Turn on the radio. Maybe you'll hear something . . ."



SAM turned on the radio just in time to hear a news report about an attempted robbery at the residence of Charles Garland. A racketeer known as Pittsburgh O'Hara had been killed. Mr. Garland's caretaker had been shot, and the police were searching for Samuel Fisher, a newspaperman who, they had

reason to believe, could throw light on the tragedy.

"Is this true?" asked Sam, turning off the news.

"I don't feel so good," said Copper.

"Oh, you don't, hey? Well, let me tell you—"

Before Sam could tell him, the door was pushed in and two distinguished looking men entered. Sam recognized them. Detectives.

"Hello, boys," said Sam.

"Save it for Clancy," said the talkative detective. His silent partner frisked Sam. Then they escorted him to the chamber of horrors where the great Clancy, his face like an excavated hunk of medieval sculpture, was waiting to warm him over the grill. With him were Happy and Storky and Storky's pal. Happy's head was in bandages, but otherwise he was in the pink. When Sam entered the room, Happy lost all control of himself.

"Dat's da mugg," he yelled. "Dat's da mugg from da noospaper. Dat's da mugg what slugged me."

Clancy looked from Happy to Sam and from Sam to Happy.

"He," said Clancy, "slugged you!"

"Yeah!"

"I've never," said Sam, "laid eyes on this specimen in my life."

Clancy looked hard at Happy. His voice was like iron with rust on it. "You sure?"

"Well," said Happy, "maybe I ain't so good rememberin' faces but I never forgets a punch." He glanced appealingly at Sam. "Punch me, buddy. Go ahead an' punch me!"

"Punch him!" ordered Clancy.

Sam shrugged. He made a fist and punched Happy. A look of scorn crossed the fighter's face.

"It ain't the guy," he announced.

"I thought you said he was," said Clancy, annoyed.

(Continued on page 145)



(Continued from page 8)

One anecdote ran like this: An oil scout, sent to spy on a wildcat well up in the hills, took board and room in a bark-peeler's hut. As he watched the woman cooking breakfast the next morning, he saw a mangy cat asleep on a shelf above the stove. Not long after he entered the kitchen, the cat woke up, yawned, staggered around the shelf, lost its balance and fell into a crock of buckwheat batter. The woman grabbed it, wiped off the batter, and put it back on the shelf.

"I declare," she said. "That's two times you've fell into the batter this morning. If you fall in again, it won't be fitten to use."

In their poverty and isolation, the people possessed a large body of rich folklore. They sang doleful ballads about Lord Randall and Lord Lovell and less doleful ones about Robin Hood. If they did not read to their children, they told them stories about Jack the Giant Killer, and passed on to them a large body of oral history about George Washington and the Indian chief Half King at Fort Venango, about the Whiskey Insurrection, and about Indian massacres and captivities. But what must have interested Gib most were the tall tales about hunting and fishing. A Nimrod shoots a bear. The bullet goes through the bear and kills a buck some distance away. Then it ricochets and kills any number of turkeys lined up on a limb. The recoil of the gun kicks the hunter over backwards. As he falls, a button from his pants flies off and kills a rabbit. He is knocked into the creek and comes out with his pockets full of fish.

Another story widely known in the region, and one that Gib was later to tell as happening to himself, concerned a young city hick who was walking in the country one day and met a farmer driving to town with a wagon load of pumpkins. The city hick, who had never seen a pumpkin before, stopped the farmer and asked what they were.

The farmer, shrewdly estimating the questioner, replied that they were mule eggs, which he was taking to town to sell.

The result was that the city hick bought one for five dollars.

As he was carrying it along the hillside, he dropped it and it went rolling down the hill until it hit a rock and broke. From behind a bush near the rock a rabbit jumped and loped off down the valley.

The city man called, "Here, colty, here! Here's your mammy!"

Gib Morgan learned all this lore as a

child, for his father, George Morgan, was a noted story-teller. Gib was to inherit his talent and to multiply it many times.

Schools were poor in western Pennsylvania, but somehow Gib managed to get a better education than most boys of his generation. His father was well to do for those times. His barge works at Emlenton (later moved to Tionesta) prospered and he died a respected member of the town council.

It was the Civil War that brought Gib's talent to light. Fort Sumter was fired on on April 12, 1861. On April 13 Governor Curtin issued a call for volunteers. Gib went over to Franklin, the county seat, on the twenty-fifth and enlisted as a private in Company C, Tenth Pennsylvania Reserve Infantry. He was not quite twenty, but since minors were not being accepted, he put his age down as twenty-one. This is probably the only lie Gib ever told for the purpose of deceiving. Army life was not what Gib and his comrades had expected it to be. They had gone in to fight. Instead, they were kept for months in confusion and uncertainty. Equipment was lacking. Sickness raged in the camps, and hospital facilities were poor or non-existent. There was no USO, no program of sports to keep the men in spirits. Men began to talk of going back home. Some companies refused to turn out for drill. Private Morgan knew that the condition was serious and he did what he could to keep up morale. He found that his stories made the disgusted men laugh. He was soon known as the best story-teller in the regiment.

We may assume that during his three years as a soldier, Gib Morgan exhibited the same good nature that later made him well liked throughout the oil country. He liked to play pranks, and he may have been one of the unnamed soldiers who after payday on June 30, 1862, outwitted a cider vendor who had set up for business in a tent near Manassas. This trader retailed his product at ten cents a glass. Some of the boys considered the price uncommonly large and the glass exceedingly small. "They determined to set up opposition. They borrowed an auger and faucet from the sutler, tapped the barrel through the tent at the other end and sold much larger glasses at a much smaller price, and made more money from the operation than the man on the inside."

Before the Tenth was mustered out in June, 1864, it saw as much action as any regiment in the Army. The regiment was twice praised in General Meade's dispatch-

A WORD TO THE WISE

Waste paper is still an important war material—it's essential for packing ammunition. So in order to make sure there's enough left over to go 'round for your favorite publication, don't forget to save all waste paper and turn it in for scrap.

es and once in General Hooker's. Although Gib was known as a brave soldier, he failed to receive extraordinary promotion. He enlisted as a private and he was honorably discharged as a private. But he had laid the foundation of his future fame. The Minstrel of the Tenth would in due time become the Minstrel of the Oil Industry.

When Gib got home from war in the spring of '64, oil excitement was reaching the crest of the first speculative boom. Visitors to the region in 1864-5 write of "sharp-eyed speculators from New York, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh, carpet sack in hand . . . going down to secure a 'big thing,' traders anxious to open a line of custom; rough fellows going down to work at the wells; and old farmers . . . who had been made rich by farms that had previously made them poor." While Gib had been on the fighting fronts, the big world had come to his native valley and with it a surge of activity that made it exceedingly stimulating to his imagination. If he had ever had any desire to escape from the scenes of his boyhood, that desire was now gone. He went to work in the oil fields and in due time became a driller. He also fell in love, and in 1868 he married Mary Elizabeth Ritchey of Richland on Ritchy Run. At the time of his marriage, Gib gave his residence as Tionesta, where his father had just moved. The oil fields were no place to take the bride of a driller, who would be completing a new well every month or so and moving to a new location; so he left Mollie at Tionesta. When the Morgan family moved on to Bear Creek, Mollie went with them. She died there in April, 1872, after giving birth to her third son, Warren.

If Mollie had lived, Gib might have saved his money, invested it in a small business, and died a respected town councillor like his father. Or he might have become the steady employee of some stable producer and retired on a pension and spent his last days in a pleasant cottage in Emlenton, Jamestown, or Marietta as so many of his fellow drillers did. But he used to say that it seemed like his luck changed when Mollie died. He became a rover, a gypsy driller and spent the next twenty years roaming from field to field, never able to settle down.

Gib retired from active drilling in 1892. That year he applied for and secured a Civil War pension. He lived with his son Warren at Eau Claire for a year or so, then in 1894 he was admitted to the National Home for Disabled Soldiers in Marion, Indiana. In 1901 he was transferred to Danville, Illinois, and in 1904 to Mountain Home, Tennessee.

On the whole he found life in the homes good. His pension was never much, but it was more pocket money than he could spend around the home. And he had the association of fellow veterans who liked his stories, although they had heard them

many times. When D. M. Hosack was living near Marion in 1901, he used to go to see Gib. What he remembers most vividly is a thin, wiry man weighing about 125 pounds seated on the lawn surrounded by some two hundred other veterans listening to his yarns.

The chief drawback to Gib's life in these days was its monotony, and that he could remedy, at least in part. Every summer he would get a furlough and journey back to the oil country in Pennsylvania. His annual homecoming became an institution, almost a triumphal entry. His first stop would be Pittsburgh. There he would register at the Bowyer Hotel, long the favorite hostelry of the oil fraternity. The Pittsburgh Gazette, which had featured oil news from the beginning, would learn of his presence (no doubt through Gib's co-operation) and would publish a story in which Gib would be linked with the first robin of spring. Old friends would begin dropping in. With them came young drillers, tool dressers and producers who had heard of Gib and were eager to meet him, hear his tales. But Gib wouldn't be rushed. Everything in due time. Somebody would propose a drink. They would file up to the bar. Bottles and glasses would be set out. After a few minutes of decorous reticence, Gib would launch out into his adventures in Texas, India, Baku, the Fiji Islands, and in other places where he had never been.

After a few days in Pittsburgh, Gib would go on up to Emlenton, Franklin, Oil City, and Titusville.

Gib would not be too long in getting to Eau Claire. That was where Warren lived. In all probability Warren would not be at home. He had taken to the temper screw himself and had done well, passing from driller to drilling contractor. He spent most of his time down in Oklahoma and Texas now. But Warren's wife, Elizabeth, liked Gib and always made him feel welcome. And there was Edna, his granddaughter. Gib never came without gifts for her. Before she was quite five years old he bought her a real watch with a gold case and jewels on the inside.

Sometimes Gib had difficulty in making his money hold out until his furlough was over. But even when his money was all spent he could manage very well. It was understood that when he drank with the oil crowd, the drinks were on somebody else. If any newcomers were ignorant of this custom, Gib had a delicate way of informing them. He would tell them all about the Whickles, those strange petroleum-eating insects that were responsible for the decreasing production of the Pennsylvania fields. Gib was doing his best to exterminate them. His method was to sprinkle applejack on the bushes around the wells; the Whickles would come and get drunk and Gib would catch them. Applejack cost money and that was the reason Gib was always broke.

If need be, Gib could obtain board and lodging in the same way he got his drinks. In the fall of 1897 John C. Chambers, then a youngster with \$90 cash and 90 days' credit, opened a general store in the new oil field at Klondike. Gib Morgan got to coming into his store. And where Gib came, customers came. Chambers paid for his room and board from November to June just in order to have him around the store as an added attraction for his customers.

For several years after his retirement Gib could still choke a cable and do his twelve-hour along with a younger man, at least for a month or two in summer when the weather was good. He might be begged into taking a job. In 1896 a sixteen-year-old youngster named Frank James got a job hauling wood to fire the boilers on the Duckworth lease near Montpelier, Indiana. Gib had a furlough from the Home at Marion and was drilling on the same lease. James, now a retired driller of Peru, Kansas, is still proud of having begun the oil game on a lease where Gib Morgan was drilling.

When approached by a producer or drilling contractor, Gib would pretend utter indifference. Once when there was a shortage of drillers in the Indiana field, a contractor went to Gib and said, "Gib, why don't you help me out? You're a driller, aren't you?"

"Am I a driller?" Gib exclaimed. "Why, man, I drilled on one well for eight years." He was hired.

Records of physical examinations in the National Archives show that Gib's health declined rather fast after 1904, but he continued to make his yearly trips to the old oil country. He came every spring until 1908. That year he didn't show up. The following February word came of his death at Mountain Home. His personal wanderings were over. But his tales kept traveling. They are known wherever men drill for oil. But too often his feats of prowess and ingenuity are attributed to a mere lumberjack named Paul Bunyan, who has never been near an oil well and who wouldn't know a walking beam from a bull wheel if he had.

TURNING from oil-field fable to fact we were interested in the following letter from Jack Saunders of Hays, Kansas. He writes—

Ever since the January issue I've been burning up on "The War of the Wildcats" by Thomson Burtis, and now to know that said story is to be made into a movie is too much.

For seventeen years I worked the oil fields off and on, at least half of that time being spent there, I'll say.

I'd like to know the extent of Mr. Burtis' oil field experience and where he assembled his data for the story.

Now the setting of this yarn—the time of setting, rather—is away before my time, but I've been personally acquainted with enough old tool hands who went through the early Oklahoma booms to have a pretty good idea of what it was like. And to the best of my knowledge, that drilling was done with cable tools and wooden rigs—not rotary and steel rigs—and I'll defy any man or group of men to skid a wooden rig to a stream and float it. For that matter, such a stunt would be harder to do with the hundred-odd foot steel rig in Mr. Burtis' story. Incidentally, I also believe if Burtis checks it over again he will find these 100-plus rigs to be a product of a later date also.

Sure a rig can be skidded. I've seen several skidded a location or two on level ground by trucks or "cats." But my most conservative guess on the hand-power required for such a job would be pretty well up the line.

That was a good story as far as entertainment value went but the details were lousy. I'd like to see this printed just to see how many other old tool and production hands may take it up.

But just for fun let's have a little hint as to the author's actual oil field experience. Maybe he can shut me up—it's been done lots of times.

We passed Oilman Saunders' letter along for Author Burtis' attention. Here's what he writes in reply—

My apologies for waiting so long to answer criticisms of the details in "War of the Wildcats," but I have been so busy that I have not even been able to get back to my home in Laguna Beach for more than two months.

My further apologies for not yet having been able to confirm positively the fact that rotary rigs were used in Oklahoma in 1907-1908. I will have that information within a week or so. Meanwhile, these things I do know positively.

Ed Mac Adams brought the first rotary rig to California as late as 1920. But as early as 1915 rotaries were being used in Texas. In 1917, that was the only type I saw in Texas, except that occasionally, on some rock formation, they went down to rock with a rotary rig and pounded through a given formation with a cable tool, which they called, I believe, the International.

1915 in Texas brings us within seven or eight years of Oklahoma. So we shall see what we shall see and I'll let you know. When the story was written, several years ago, I know I must have had good reason to say rotary instead of cable tool. In case I am wrong on this minor detail (and of the numerous oil men I know or who have written me, none has brought the matter up) it did not, of course, affect the plot of the story in any way. Nevertheless, *Adventure* is famous for its accuracy, and

(Continued on page 141)



ASK ADVENTURE

Information you can't get elsewhere

A CUTLASS from the *Constitution*?

Request:—Recently there has come into my possession an old cutlass that has been in the family for many years—how many I can't say, although family talk is to the effect that it came from the old *Constitution*.

The blade is straight, spear-pointed, 26¼" long, with channels 20" long from the hilt towards the point, on both sides. The grip is wood, banded at each end 5" long, and is protected by a plain basket guard.

Stamped on the blade near the hilt is the name STARR. The initials J T are carved in the hilt, evidently by some user; and the letters N 1 are also carved in the hilt.

Information regarding the date of manufacture might help to verify the *Constitution* yarn; it wouldn't surprise me, however, to know the piece is of English make.

—Harrison S. Kendall,
Fairfield Manor,
Ft. Wayne, Ind.

Reply by Capt. R. E. Gardner:—The blade of the weapon described in your letter was fabricated at Middletown, Conn., at the factory of N. Starr (later Nathan Starr & Son). It is an artillery blade.

N. Starr—the elder—was born at Middletown, April 14, 1755. He established as a sword cutler and on October 15, 1798, he received his first government contract. This covered 10,000 cavalry sabres at \$5.00 each, and 4,000 artillery swords at \$4.00 each.

Nathan Starr, Jr. (Feb. 20, 1784: Aug. 31, 1852) entered the business in 1798.

Among the six government contracts secured by the Starrs is that of Jan. 5, 1819, which included, among other items, 4,000 artillery swords. Your blade was produced

during the life of one or the other contracts which provided for artillery swords.

BAMBINO background—and Catcher Clarke.

Request:—Could you please answer the following questions on baseball for me?

1. Nicknames of the minor league teams on which Babe Ruth played.

2. Name of Babe Ruth's first manager in organized baseball.

3. First name of player on Detroit team of 1905 or 1906 whose last name was Clarke.

—Eddie Lee,
Rice Lake, Wisc.

Reply by Frederick G. Lieb:—1. Babe Ruth was with only two minor league teams, both in 1914. He came up with the Baltimore Orioles of the International League. After the Red Sox bought him in mid-season, they farmed him out to the Providence club, then of the same league. Its nickname was the Clam Diggers.

2. Ruth's first manager in Organized Baseball was the late Jack Dunn, manager and owner of the Baltimore club.

3. No Clarke played with Detroit in 1905 or 1906. You perhaps are thinking of a catcher named Justin Jay (Nig) Clarke, who lived in Detroit but played with Cleveland in those years. He later played for St. Louis Browns and Washington in American League and Philadelphia and Pittsburgh in National. He came into prominence in 1906 by hitting .358 for 57 games, second in the league, but never approached that figure after that.

THE ASK ADVENTURE SERVICE is free, provided self-addressed envelope and **FULL POSTAGE** for reply are enclosed. Correspondents writing to or from foreign countries must enclose International Reply Coupons, which are exchangeable for stamps of any country in the International Postal Union.

Send each question *direct* to the expert in charge of the section whose field covers it. He will reply by mail. **Do Not** send questions to the magazine. Be definite; explain your case sufficiently to guide the expert you question. The magazine does not assume any responsibility. **No Reply** will be made to requests for partners, financial backing or employment.

★(Enclose addressed envelope with International Reply Coupon)

Notice: Many of our *Ask Adventure* experts are now engaged in government service of one kind or another. Some are on active duty in the Army or Navy, others serving in an executive or advisory capacity on various of the boards and offices that have been set up to hasten the nation's war effort. Almost without exception these men have consented to remain on our staff, carry on their work for the magazine if humanly possible, but with the understanding that for the duration such work is of secondary importance to their official duties. This is as it should be, so when you don't receive answers to queries as promptly as you have in the past, please be patient. And remember that foreign mails are slow and uncertain these days, many curtailed drastically. Bear with us and we'll continue to try to serve you as speedily as possible.

ASK ADVENTURE EXPERTS

SPORTS AND HOBBIES

Archery—EARL B. POWELL, care of *Adventure*.

Baseball—FREDERICK LIEB, care of *Adventure*.

Basketball—STANLEY CARHART, 99 Broad St., Matawan, N. J.

Big Game Hunting in North America: Guides and equipment—A. H. CARHART, c/o *Adventure*.

Boxing—COL. JOHN V. GROMBACH, care of *Adventure*.

Camping—PAUL M. FINK, Jonesboro, Tenn.

Canoeing: Paddling, sailing, cruising, regattas—EDGAR S. PERKINS, 1325 So. Main St., Princeton, Ill.

Coins and Medals—WILLIAM L. CLARK, American Numismatic Society, Broadway at 156th St., N. Y. C.

Dogs—FREEMAN LLOYD, care of *Adventure*.

Fencing—COL. JOHN V. GROMBACH, care of *Adventure*.

First Aid—DR. CLAUDE P. FORDYCE, care of *Adventure*.

Fishing: Fresh water; fly and bait casting; bait casting outfits; fishing trips—JOHN ALDEN KNIGHT, 929 W. 4th St., Williamsport, Penna.

Fishing, Salt water: Bottom fishing, surf casting; trolling; equipment and locations—C. BLACKBURN MILLER, care of *Adventure*.

Fly and Bait Casting, Tournament—"CHIEF" STANWOOD, East Sullivan, Maine.

Globe-trotting and Vagabonding—ROBERT SPIERS BENJAMIN, care of *Adventure*.

Health-Building Activities, Hiking—DR. CLAUDE P. FORDYCE, care of *Adventure*.

Motor Boating—GERALD T. WHITE, Montville, N. J.

Motorcycling: Regulations, mechanics, racing—CHARLES M. DODGE, care of *Adventure*.

Mountain Climbing—THEODORE S. SOLOMONS, 952 No. Hudson Ave., Hollywood, Calif.

Old Songs—ROBERT WHITE, 913 W. 7th St., Los Angeles, Calif.

Old-Time Sailing—CHAS. H. HALL, care of *Adventure*.

Rifles, Pistols, Revolvers: Foreign and American—DONEGAN WIGGINS, 170 Liberty Rd., Salem, Oregon.

Shotguns, American and Foreign: Wing Shooting and Field Trails—ROY S. TINNEY, care of *Adventure*.

Small Boating: Skiffs, outboard, small launch, river and lake cruising—RAYMOND S. SPEARS, Inglewood, Calif.

Swimming—LOUIS DEB. HANDLEY, 115 West 11th St., N. Y., N. Y.

Swords, Spears, Pole Arms and Armor—MAJOR R. E. GARDNER, care of *Adventure*.

Track—JACKSON SCHOLZ, R. D. No. 1, Doylestown, Pa.

Woodcraft—PAUL M. FINK, Jonesboro, Tenn.

Wrestling—MURL E. THRUSH, New York Athletic Club, 59th St. and 7th Ave., N. Y., N. Y.

Yachting—A. R. KNAUER, 6720 Jeffery Ave., Chicago, Ill.

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

Anthropology: American, north of the Panama Canal, customs, dress, architecture; pottery and decorative arts, weapons and implements, fetishism, social divisions—ARTHUR WOODWARD, Los Angeles Museum, Exposition Park, Los Angeles, Calif.

Aviation: Airplanes, airships, airways and landing fields, contests, aero clubs, insurance, laws, licenses, operating data, schools, foreign activities, publications, parachutes, gliders—MAJOR FALK HARMEL, 709 Longfellow St., Washington, D. C.

Entomology: Insects and spiders; venomous and disease-carrying insects—DR. S. W. FROST, 465 E. Foster Ave., State College, Penna.

Forestry, North American: The U. S. Forestry Service, our national forests, conservation and use—A. H. CARHART, c/o *Adventure*.

Forestry, Tropical: Tropical forests and products—WM. R. BARBOUR, 1091 Springfield Rd., Atlanta, Ga.

Herpetology: Reptiles and amphibians—CLIFFORD H. POPE, care of *Adventure*.

Marine Architecture: Ship modeling—CHAS. H. HALL, care of Adventure.

Mining, Prospecting, and Precious Stones: Anywhere in North America. Outfitting; any mineral, metallic or non-metallic—VICTOR SHAW, care of Adventure.

Ornithology: Birds; their habits and distribution—DAVIS QUINN, 5 Minerva Pl., Bronx, N. Y.

Photography: Outfitting, work in out-of-the-way places; general information—PAUL L. ANDERSON, 36 Washington St., East Orange, N. J.

Radio: Telegraphy, telephony, history, receiver construction, portable sets—DONALD MCNICOL, care of Adventure.

Railroads: In the United States, Mexico and Canada—R. T. NEWMAN, 701 N. Main St., Paris, Ill.

Sawmilling—HAPSBURG LIEBE, care of Adventure.

Sunken Treasure: Treasure ships; deep-sea diving; salvage operations and equipment—LIEUTENANT HARRY E. RIESEBERG, care of Adventure.

Taxidermy—EDWARD B. LANG, 156 Joralemon St., Belleville, N. J.

Wildcrafting and Trapping—RAYMOND S. SPEARS, Inglewood, Calif.

MILITARY, NAVAL AND POLICE

Federal Investigation Activities: Secret Service, etc.—FRANCIS H. BENT, care of Adventure.

The Merchant Marine—GORDON MACALLISTER, care of Adventure.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police—ALBC CAVADAS, King Edward High School, Vancouver, B. C.

State Police—FRANCIS H. BENT, care of Adventure.

U. S. Marine Corps—MAJOR F. W. HOPKINS, care of Adventure.

U. S. Navy—LIEUTENANT DURAND KIRFER, care of Adventure.

GEOGRAPHICAL SUBJECTS

Philippine Islands—BUCK CONNER, Conner Field, Quartzsite, Ariz.

★New Guinea—L. P. B. ARMIT, care of Adventure.

★New Zealand, Cook Island, Samoa—TOM L. MILLS, 27 Bowen St., Feilding, New Zealand.

★Australia and Tasmania—ALAN FOLBY, 243 Elizabeth St., Sydney, Australia.

★South Sea Islands—WILLIAM MCCREADIE, "Ingle Nook," 39 Cornelia St., Wiley Park, N. S. W., Australia.

Hawaii—JOHN SNELL, Deputy Administrator, Defense Savings Staff, 1055 Bishop St., Honolulu, T. H.

Madagascar—RALPH LINTON, Dept. of Anthropology, Columbia University, N. Y., N. Y.

Africa, Part 1 ★Libya, Morocco, Egypt, Tunis, Algeria, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan—CAPT. H. W. EADES, 3808 West 26th Ave., Vancouver, B. C. 2 Abyssinia, Italian Somaliland, British Somali Coast Protectorate, Eritrea, Uganda, Tanganyika, Kenya—GORDON MACCRAGH, 2231 W. Harbor Drive, St. Petersburg, Florida. 3 Tripoli, Sahara caravans—CAPTAIN BEVERLY GIDDINGS, care of Adventure. 4 Bechuana-land, Southwest Africa, Angola, Belgian Congo, Egyptian Sudan and French West Africa—MAJOR S. L. GLENISTER, care of Adventure. 5 ★Cape Province, Orange Free State, Natal, Zululand, Transvaal, Rhodesia—PETER FRANKLIN, Box 1491, Durban, Natal, So. Africa.

Asia, Part 1 ★Siam, Malay States, Straits Settlements, Java, Sumatra, Dutch East Indies, Ceylon—V. B. WINDLE, care of Adventure. 2 French Indo-China, Hong Kong, Macao, Tibet; Southern, Eastern and Central China—SEWARD S. CRAMER, care of Adventure. 4 Persia, Arabia—CAPTAIN BEVERLY GIDDINGS, care of Adventure. 5 ★Palestine—CAPTAIN H. W. EADES, 3808 West 26th Ave., Vancouver, B. C.

Europe, Part 1 Denmark, Germany, Scandinavia—G. I. COLBRON, care of Adventure.

Central America—ROBERT SPIERS BENJAMIN, care of Adventure.

South America, Part 1 Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Chile—EDGAR YOUNG, care of Adventure.

★West Indies—JOHN B. LEEFINGWELL, Box 1333, Nueva Gerona, Isle of Pines, Cuba.

Iceland—G. I. COLBRON, care of Adventure.

Baffinland and Greenland—VICTOR SHAW, care of Adventure.

Labrador—WILMOT T. DEBELL, care of Adventure.

Mexico, Part 1 Northern Border States—J. W. WHITEAKER, 2903 San Gabriel St., Austin, Tex. 2 Quintana Roo, Yucatan Campeche—CAPTAIN W. RUSSELL SHEETS, care of Adventure.

Canada, Part 1 ★Southeastern Quebec—WILLIAM MACMILLAN, 89 Laurentide Ave., Quebec, Canada. 3 ★Ottawa Valley and Southeastern Ontario—HARRY M. MOORE, The Courier Advocate, Trenton Ont., Canada. 4 ★Georgian Bay and Southern Ontario, National Parks Camping—A. D. L. ROBINSON, 1261 Ouellette Ave., Windsor, Ont., Canada. 5 ★Yukon, British Columbia and Alberta—C. FLOWDEN, Plowden Bay, Howe Sound, B. C. 6 ★Northern Saskatchewan; Indian life and language, hunting, trapping—H. S. M. KEMP, 501-10th St., E., Prince Albert, Sask.

Alaska—THEODORE S. SOLOMONS, 952 No. Hudson Ave., Hollywood, Calif.

Western U. S., Part 1 Pacific Coast States—FRANK WINCH, care of Adventure. 3 New Mexico; Indians, etc.—H. F. ROBINSON, 1211 W. Roma Ave., Albuquerque, N. M. 4 Nevada, Montana and Northern Rockies—FRED W. EGELSTON, Elks' Home, Elko, Nev. 5 Idaho and environs—R. T. NEWMAN, 701 N. Main St., Paris, Ill. 6 Arizona, Utah—C. C. ANDERSON, care of Adventure. 7 Texas, Oklahoma—J. W. WHITEAKER, 2903 San Gabriel St., Austin, Tex.

Middle Western U. S., Part 2 Ohio River and Tributaries and Mississippi River—Geo. A. ZERR, Vine and Hill Sts., Crafton, P. O., Ingram, Penna. 3 Lower Mississippi from St. Louis down, Louisiana swamps, St. Francis, Arkansas Bottom—RAYMOND S. SPEARS, Inglewood, Calif.

Eastern U. S., Part 1 Maine—"CHIEF" STANWOOD, East Sullivan, Me. 2 Vt., N. H., Conn., R. I., Mass.—HOWARD R. VOIGHT, 40 Chapel St., Woodmont, Conn. 3 Adirondacks, New York—RAYMOND S. SPEARS, Inglewood, Calif. 4 New Jersey—F. H. BENT, care of Adventure. 5 Ala., Tenn., Miss., N. C., S. C., Fla. Ga.—HAPSBURG LIEBE, care of Adventure. 6 The Great Smokies and Appalachian Mountains south of Virginia—PAUL M. FINK, Jonesboro, Tenn.

THE TRAIL AHEAD



Next month we go to Calcutta where GI Joe bumps shoulders with Sikh and Sepoy in the bazaar, jostles I.C.S. *wallahs* and Aussie fliers at the bar of the Continental Hotel, takes his ease at tiffin-time under a *punkah* when he's lucky enough to get a week-end leave from one of the myriad jobs he has to do in India today.

"THE GLORY OF CORPORAL FLITT"

By KENNETH PERKINS

—tells the fabulous tale of an American mech—from the time he alights from the train from Chittagong till he changes his GI pants for the jodhpurs of a maharajah. An action-packed long novelette by an author who knows India—and what's more can bring it to life on the printed page!



F. R. Buckley in "Of Chain Mail and Green Cheese" adds another brilliant star to the Constellation Caradocso, permitting us to watch that swashbuckling nonesuch Luigi demonstrate that too much faith in one's fellow man was just as foolish, in war or peace, in 15th-century Italy as it is today. . . . E. Hoffmann Price in "Graven Image" takes us to the high Pamirs where Russia and China meet on the roof of the world for the wind-up of a twenty-year struggle between East and West in which each decides to meet the other half way. . . . Plus fine short stories by Carl D. Lane, F. E. Rechnitzer, Lyndon Ripley and others. Another gripping installment of Edmund Gilligan's "Captain's Don't Cry" with the *Golden Hind* casting off for the Grand Banks. . . . An illuminating fact story of the naval intelligence of the Confederacy during the Civil War by H. G. Russell. . . . And an unusually rich assortment of verse, features and departments.

Adventure

25c

On sale August 11th


FULVEX
FLEA POWDER
Kills fleas

JUST APPLY TO ONE SPOT

25¢
AND 50¢

High School Course at Home Many Finish in 2 Years

Go as rapidly as your time and abilities permit. Course equivalent to resident school work—prepares for college entrance exams. Standard H.S. texts supplied. Diploma. Credit for H. S. subjects already completed. Single subjects if desired. High school education is very important for advancement in business and industry and socially. Don't be handicapped all your life. Be a High School graduate. Start your training now. Free Bulletin on request. No obligation.

American School, Dept. HC49, Drexel at 58th, Chicago 37


PERSONAL PHOTO STATIONERY
THAT CARRIES YOUR PHOTOGRAPH

Now... you can make your letters to that boy or girl in service and to friends at home like a "personal visit" when you use rich, two-fold **Photographic Stationery** with life-like photograph of yourself at the top. A marvelous morale builder. Ideal gift with a friend's picture. **SPECIAL OFFER**—Just send \$1.00 with photo, snapshot or negative for our Special Box of **Photographic Stationery**. Photo returned. **NATIONAL PHOTO ART, Dept. 619, Janesville, Wis.**

STAMMER?

This new 128-page book, "Stammering, Its Cause and Correction," describes the Bogue Unit Method for scientific correction of stammering and stuttering—successful for 43 years.

Ben. N. Bogue, Dept. 2957, Circle Tower, Indianapolis 4, Ind.

 GET THIS
FREE
BOOK!

LIKE TO WRITE?—EARN EXTRA MONEY!!

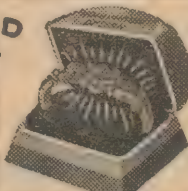
Now writers needed to prepare articles for magazines. Simple new method enables YOU to re-write ideas which SELL! Easy to enter profitable writing field now! Earn good money in your spare time. Send for **the FREE LESSON** and **FREE** details immediately. **WRITERS SERVICE BUREAU—DEPT. S, 101 NO. ROBERTSON, BEVERLY HILLS, CALIF.**

Free for Asthma During Summer

If you suffer with those terrible attacks of Asthma when it is hot and sultry; if heat, dust and general mugginess make you wheeze and choke as if each gasp for breath was the very last; if restful sleep is impossible because of the struggle to breathe; if you feel the disease is slowly wearing your life away, don't fail to send at once to the **Frontier Asthma Co.** for a free trial of a remarkable method. No matter where you live or whether you have any faith in any remedy under the Sun, send for this free trial. If you have suffered for a life-time and tried everything you could learn of without relief; even if you are utterly discouraged, do not abandon hope but send today for this free trial. It will cost you nothing. Address

 Frontier Asthma Co.
462 Niagara St.,

 435-M Frontier Bldg.
Buffalo, N. Y.

**MATCHED
BRIDAL
PAIR**
\$5.95
EACH
OR
BOTH FOR
\$9.95


DIAMOND RINGS

Just to get acquainted we will send you smart, new 10K yellow gold engagement ring or wedding ring. Romance design engagement ring set with flashing, Rose cut diamond solitaire in sentimental, sweet-heart mounting. Wedding ring is deeply embossed, 10K yellow gold, set with 3 genuine chip Diamonds. Either ring only \$5.95 or both for \$9.95 plus postage and 20% Federal tax. **SEND NO MONEY** with order. Just name and ring size. Pay on arrival, then wear rings 10 days on money-back guarantee. Rush order now! **EMPIRE DIAMOND CO., Dept. 866-DS, Jefferson, Iowa.**

LOST TRAILS

NOTE: We offer this department to readers who wish to get in touch again with friends or acquaintances separated by years or chance. Give your own name and full address. Please notify *Adventure* immediately should you establish contact with the person you are seeking. Space permitting, each inquiry addressed to *Lost Trails* will be run in three consecutive issues. Requests by and for women are declined, as not considered effective in a magazine published for men. *Adventure* also will decline any notice that may not seem a sincere effort to recover an old friendship, or that may not seem suitable to the editors for any other reason. No charge is made for publication of notices.

Does anyone know anything about Fred E. Colcord? Party himself or any informant please write E. D. Colcord, P. O. Box 53, Gardiner, Maine.

Anyone knowing whereabouts of Joe Ceylon, violinist, please let me hear from you. I met him in Miami and West Palm Beach, Florida in 1938 where I was then playing. Irving Siegel, P. O. Box 2108, Miami, 12, Florida.

M. Smith of 968 Neilson St., Albany 6, California wants to get in touch with Rube and Bill Smith of the Alta Rooms in Walla Walla, Washington some years ago.

Ben H. Byrd, telegrapher, working for the Union Pacific R.R. about 1927 or '28. Would like to contact, or learn of present residence. Frank L. Alden, 462 N. Ave. 52, Los Angeles, Calif.

Anyone knowing the whereabouts of Jesse Leroy Jemison, known as Roy Jemison or Roy Williams, plasterer by trade, formerly of the middle west, please notify Jesse L. Travis 765-15th St.; Apt. 1, Oakland, Calif.

Anyone knowing the whereabouts of Robert Limbach, the best pal I ever had, last heard from in the Merchant Marine, please write me. Robert Wallish, 3522 W. 12th Place, Chicago, 23, Ill.

Earl Chew, formerly of Troop "B" 4th U. S. Cavalry, last heard of was a motorman on streetcars in Indianapolis, Ind. Get in touch with your old pal "Chink," otherwise Horace M. Henninger, 905 Irving St., N.E., 17 Washington, D. C.

(Continued from page 135)

we who write for it are jealous of that reputation and try hard not to smear it.

As for a steel rig in my story—you won't find a steel rig mentioned, I'm sure. It was a wooden rig.

Now as for moving the rig. You say you'll defy anybody to skid a rig that far. I didn't say skid. I specified rollers—the same process as they use to move entire houses for miles. The only problem is to keep the rig from falling over. Ropes solved that. I believe any house mover will tell you that moving a wooden rig on rollers is a cinch.

I could have used other methods. In Mexico I've seen a whole tankfarm of empty fifty-five-thousand-barrel storage tanks moving cross-country. How? By building shallow dikes around them, and to the place where they were being moved; flooding the area around the tanks, and the runway, to a depth of less than a foot; and merely floating the monsters to where they were going.

For the story, had I not been sure of my ground, I could have easily located the rig close enough to the stream to make that method assist the transportation of it. I specified that all metal had been removed from the wooden rig.

As for my experience in oil, I can't say I ever did an honest day's work on a well in my life. On the other hand, I have deliberately and consciously studied every phase of the oil business, from traveling over the countryside with geologists to practically living through the drilling of complete wells in Texas and Mexico and California. I have lived and eaten and drunk with oil scouts, land men, geologists, roughnecks, and drillers—and yarned for many an hour with oldtimers who are now production managers for major companies, dock superintendents, trouble shooters and professional fire-putter-outers.

If I make mistakes it's carelessness, and not ignorance, and if you have caught me up on rotaries in Oklahoma in 1907 it will be the first time in twenty years of writing that such a criticism on a technicality has ever stuck.

I'm glad you were entertained, sorry you were burned up, and really hope you're right about rotaries in Oklahoma. It would make you feel better, no doubt, and keep me on my toes.

Thanks for your interest, and you'll be hearing from me.

We'd be interested too in hearing from other old tool and production hands who can give us the straight goods on this. We're just as anxious as Mr. Saunders or Author Burtis to have such details correct and don't in the least mind being hollered at when we pull an unwitting boner. Who's to keep us on our toes if not you alert readers?



CASH
WHEN YOU
NEED IT MOST

AMAZING **NEW**
GOLD SEAL
POLICY
COSTS LESS THAN \$1 a month

PAYS accumulated
ACCIDENT BENEFITS \$**6000.00**
for Accidental Loss of Life,
Limb, or Sight up to

For LOSS OF TIME! \$**2400.00**
Accident Disability Benefits
up to \$100 a month for as
long as 24 months, or

SICKNESS BENEFITS \$**100.00** **PER**
For Loss of Time due to
Sickness, a maximum
Monthly Income of **MO.**

HOSPITAL EXPENSES \$**650.00**
for Sickness or Accident, in-
cluding \$5.00 a day for hos-
pital room, up to

All Around PROTECTION! . . . Acci-
dents happen to 20 persons every minute of every day;
and sickness strikes when least expected. So why take
chances? NOW you can have all-around insurance pro-
tection, backed by an old-line **LEGAL RESERVE** Com-
pany for less than \$1 a month. Policy pays for **ALL** acci-
dents, **ALL** the common sicknesses, even for minor in-
juries; and disability benefits start from very first day.

NO MEDICAL EXAMINATION required!
No red tape! Policy issued **BY MAIL** at
BIG SAVINGS. Ages 15 to 69. Actual Pol-
icy sent for 10 Days' **FREE** Examination.
ACT NOW! Write for it today. No cost. No
obligation. No salesman will call.

FREE 10-Day Inspection Coupon

THE SERVICE LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
453D Service Life Bldg. Omaha, Nebr.
Without cost or obligation, send your **GOLD SEAL**
\$1-A-MONTH Policy for 10 DAYS' **FREE** INSPECTION.

Name _____
Address _____ Age _____
City _____ State _____
Beneficiary _____

HEARTBURN

**Relieved in 5 minutes or
double your money back**

When excess stomach acid causes painful, suffocating gas, sour stomach and heartburn, doctors usually prescribe the fastest-acting medicines known for symptomatic relief—medicines like those in Bell-ans Tablets. No laxative. Bell-ans brings comfort in a jiffy or double your money back on return of bottle to us. 25c everywhere.

BECOME AN EXPERT ACCOUNTANT

Executive Accountants and C. P. A.'s earn \$2,000 to \$10,000 a year. Thousands of firms need them. About 20,000 Certified Public Accountants in the U. S. We train you thoroughly at home in spare time for C. P. A. examinations or executive accounting positions. Previous experience unnecessary. Personal training under supervision of staff of C. P. A.'s, including members of the American Institute of Accountants. Write for free book, "Accountancy, the Profession That Pays."

LaSalle Extension University, Dept. 8334-H Chicago
A Correspondence Institution



Learn Profitable Profession in 90 days at Home

MEN AND WOMEN, 18 TO 50—Many Swedish Massage graduates make \$50, \$75 or even more per week. Large full time incomes from doctors, hospitals, sanatoriums, clubs or private practice. Others make good money in spare time. You can win independence and prepare for future security by training at home and qualifying for Diploma, Anatomy Charts and 32-page Illustrated Book FREE—Now! The College of Swedish Massage, Dept. C95, 100 E. Ohio St., Chicago 11

LAW

STUDY AT HOME FOR PERSONAL SUCCESS AND LARGER EARNINGS. 25 years expert instruction—over 100,000 students enrolled. LL.B. Degree awarded. All texts furnished. Easy payments. Send for FREE BOOK—"Law and Executive Guidance"—NOW!

AMERICAN EXTENSION SCHOOL OF LAW
Dept. 44-B, 640 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.

USED Correspondence Courses

NELSON CO., 321 So. Wabash Av., Dept. 2-05, Chicago 4, Ill.

Complete HOME-STUDY Courses and self-instruction books, slightly used. Rented, sold, exchanged. All subjects. Satisfaction guaranteed. Cash paid for used courses. Full details \$22 page illustrated bargain catalog Free. Write now.

HERE'S YOUR FREE! POWER-PLUS MUSCLE CHART

JOE BONOMO, a leading authority on health & physical development, offers you FREE his NEW Double-View MUSCLE CHART. Shows & describes entire body. Learn HOW to use your body & muscles. Enjoy the HAPPINESS OF HEALTH & STRENGTH. Get your FREE Chart NOW! Send name, address, age, weight, height to Dept. M-3

JOE BONOMO
1841 BROADWAY NEW YORK 23, N.Y.

MAN ALIVE!

Get Back Your Natural Vigor!

Be fit and ready for every emergency. America needs fit men and women. All nature asks is an easy, natural stimulation. Eliminate the poisons that make you tired, lousy, and aimless.

Nature Needs a Helping Hand

... when your system becomes clogged, poisons linger in the intestinal tract. YOU become sluggish, tired, rundown ... Your organs don't function as nature intended—so FREE your clogged system of the poisons and discomfort—the easy way with quick-acting NATURE SEEDS.

If Not Delighted—Your Money Back
Don't Delay. Get Vlm Today. Just send name and address and pay postman \$2.25 which includes C.O.D. fee and postage, or if you send \$2.00 now, we pay postage ... and the easy way to Natural Living is YOURS.

NATURE SEEDS, Dept. PP-8
175 EAST BROADWAY, NEW YORK 2, N. Y.

MRS. P. M. RULEAU of Mountain View, Arkansas writes—

I've always heard that women are traditionally supposed to be *persona non grata* at the *Camp-Fire* (Don't believe a word of it, lady!—K.S.W.) but I have to tell you that Harry Botsford's "fact story" in the April issue, *The Most Dangerous Job in the World*, reminds me:

In 1879, at that same Bradford, Penn., mentioned in the article, my stepfather, Jacob Boveé Nelson, was a well-shooter—I should judge a very good one, since he had followed the game for several years—transporting his nitro by means of a buckboard and a black horse known throughout that section as "Devil Dick," celebrated for doing his best to kill any man that came within easy reach and especially into his stall. BUT—once harnessed and hitched up (my mother usually did this, for Dick was partial to women), he ambled along reasonably peaceably; and when the buckboard was loaded with nitro, he became the world's most careful and cautious horse. That was hilly country (it probably is yet, but I haven't seen it since I was six or seven), roads were mere indications, stumps were everywhere, and on the face of it, it simply wasn't any country to travel loaded with potential death. But they (stepfather and Dick) did travel it in perfect safety; the horse easing the buckboard over rough places with uncanny skill, and down hills by bracing his rump against it. Once the buckboard was unloaded, Dick was ready for battle again. Query: How did he know what he carried? How did he know the danger?

Frankly, we don't know how to account for such equine restraint at the exact moment when restraint might be said to have been at a premium. We can recall hearing of only one other set of analogous circumstances. Our maternal grandfather, according to family anecdote, had a penchant for both unruly horses and peach brandy. It is said that he was never able to control completely the skittish team of blooded bays he owned when stone sober, but that as soon he befuddled himself with a jugful the horses turned docile as kittens and always brought him home safe to the farm from his binge in town. Of course peach brandy isn't nitro, though it does have a certain explosive quality of its own, and possibly other factors should be taken into account.

No, we're afraid we just can't answer how "Devil Dick" knew what he carried. Or grandpappy's team either. But we're awful glad both black and bays were conscious of their respective responsibilities. There would certainly have been hell to pay if any

of those horses hadn't paid strict attention to business!

How many "old-timers" remember Hudson Maxim's "Dynamite Stories" which ran in these pages back in 1911?

KEITH EDGAR, whose fourth Crazy McIntosh story appears this month, has been called on the carpet by several old railroaders who say such mad goings-on simply couldn't be. They cram their letters full of highly technical references to the amount of steam pressure that can be delivered in a certain type of engine under certain circumstances, and the absence of valves on either side of the nigger-head tee in the smoke box—all quite beyond our ken—to bolster their criticisms. We've passed all these comments along to the author to answer and within the limits of our own understanding of the various esoteric details under controversy it seems to us that he has held his own pretty well.

When "Petticoat Trouble" arrived at our desk it was accompanied by the following notation. Author Edgar says—

Incidentally, I write about Crazy McIntosh now with a copy of *Grimshaw's Locomotive Catechism* at my elbow so that there will be no slight point on which a reader can argue. (Oh, they'll argue, all right, but they'll be wrong!) In "Petticoat Trouble" the accident to the pipe and its method of jerry-repair on the run is the real McCoy. See *Grimshaw* if you don't believe me. Even my Dad, who is as critical as hell about those stories, when he read the script, said, "Godammit, that reminds me of the time we had to pull the whole stinkin' pipe out of 2022 and use the blowers all the way in. We had one hell of a time keeping a head of steam."

WE HAVE exhausted our supply of the pamphlet reprints of "Riley Grannan's Last Adventure" and can fill no more orders now. In fact some remittances already in our hands will have to be returned with apologies and thanks, for because of the paper shortage we are not planning to re-issue until after the war. We do plan, however, to print the famous piece once again in the magazine and will announce in advance just when it will appear, so anyone who has missed out on the pamphlet can acquire it in that form.—K.S.W.



Radio Lesson FREE



See How I Train You at Home to BE A RADIO TECHNICIAN

Mail coupon. Get sample lesson and 64-page book, "Win Rich Rewards in Radio"—BOTH FREE. The Radio repair business is booming. Radio Technicians make good money. Broadcasting Stations, Police and Aviation Radio, Manufacturers and other Radio fields need trained men. I show beginners how to start making \$5, \$10 a week EXTRA fixing Radios in spare time soon after enrolling. My training includes Television and Electronic Principles. Find out what Radio offers YOU. Mail Coupon NOW for sample lesson and book FREE.

MR. J. E. SMITH, President, Dept. 4HS9
National Radio Institute,
Washington 9, D. C.

Mail me lesson and book FREE.
(Write plainly.) Age.....

Name.....

Address.....

City.....State.....Zip.....

AUDELS Carpenters and Builders Guides 4 vols. \$6



Inside Trade Information for Carpenters, Builders, Joiners, Building Mechanics and all Woodworkers. These Guides give you the shortest instructions that you want—including new methods, calculations, plans, systems and money saving suggestions. An easy progressive course for the apprentice and student. A practical daily helper and Quick Reference for the master worker. Carpenters everywhere are using these Guides as a Helping Hand to Faster Work, Better Work and Higher Pay. To get this assistance for yourself, simply fill in and mail the FREE COUPON below.

Inside Trade Information On:

How to use the steel square—How to file and set saws—How to build furniture—How to use a mitre box—How to use the chalk line—How to use rules and scales—How to make joints—Carpenters arithmetic—Solving measurement problems—Estimating strength of timbers—How to set girders and sills—How to frame houses and roofs—How to estimate costs—How to build houses, barns, garages, bungalows, etc.—How to read and draw plans—Drawing up specifications—How to excavate—How to use settings 12, 13 and 17 on the steel square—How to build hoists and scaffolds—skylights—How to build stairs—How to put on interior trim—How to hang doors—How to lay-lay floors—How to paint.



THEO. AUDEL & CO., 49 W. 23rd St., New York City

Mail Audels Carpenters and Builders Guides, 4 vols. on 7 days' free trial. N.O.K. I will remit \$1 in 7 days, and \$1 monthly until \$6 is paid. Otherwise I will return them. No obligation unless I am satisfied.

Name.....

Address.....

Occupation.....

Business.....

FEU

(Continued from page 121)

to pull his wrappings closer, veiling his eyes.

For the first time, Swain laughed.

"Ho, Lord of Death," he roared, "it is my thought that you are but a jest such as Goulbain sharpens to bemuse the light-minded. You traffic in fear. You have nothing inside that blubber-tub save guts. You are Death in life, as empty as those ghost-men who carry you. You are nothing."

And he turned on his heel, and walked off the drawbridge.



THE King's listlessness bothered Swain, and he could see that Goulbain was equally disturbed. The jester's sunken eyes never left Amalric's wan features. What could be amiss?

"And so," Swain concluded, "I took Sinan's word for what it was worth—nothing, let be that we had found the chink in his mail, the water-tunnel. Without water, Masrouf is a prison in which he and his slaves would thirst before they starved.

Amalric nodded his bent head. The silence in the royal pavillion became oppressive. Swain simply tugged at his beard, but Goulbain rose lithely with a fretful jangle of silver bells.

"What more could Swain have achieved, brother?" he demanded. "It is more than the Templars have done since Godfrey's reign!"

The King's eyes lifted wearily to theirs.

"In all the land I have no friends to match you two," he answered slowly. "You have wrought a miracle, as I knew well you would. But—and this you do not know—Andronicus did more than escape the net you skilfully spread for him, Swain. He"—Amalric's fingers clenched, and he laughed, but not in mirth—"he exploited the treachery of my people, of my own family, to put another slight upon my honor, aye, and upon the Kingdom. You do not understand?" A second peal of bitter laughter. "He exchanged one sister for another, yet more depraved."

Swain was on his feet now, beard bristling.

THE END

"She of Antioch? Melisande? That—that misbegotten tavern wench?" he snarled.

"My mother got her, Swain," the King reminded him, without temper. "Belike, my father had some responsibility, too. Do not mistake me, I am not proud of my sisters. What you think of them, that do I, also."

Goulbain placed a hand upon his shoulder.

"How came this?" asked the jester.

"From what her women say, Andronicus sent minions to her in answer to a solicitation she had dispatched him. Blessed Saints, what a mockery of Christendom!" He sighed. "She rode out to hunt some days since. Andronicus appeared. Her caitiff knights made no effort to stay him—you'll find them hanging by Antioch's tent. The last her women saw of her, she was in the Caesar's arms."

"You are well rid of her," exploded Swain.

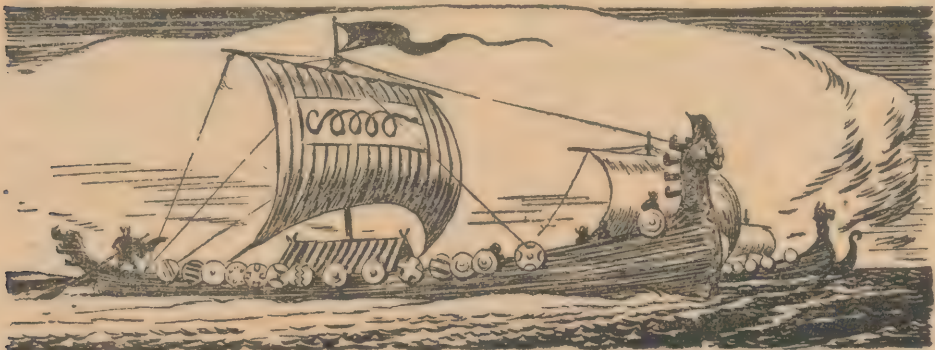
"That is my thought," Amalric assented. But my shame is for the disgrace she has wrought upon the miserable, well-meaning wight, her brother, who chances to be the weak protector of our Lord Jesus' last resting place on earth. It is my task to harry the man who caused her to put this shame upon me and my trust. That task is no longer yours, friend," he added. "You have done more than I had right to ask of you. No fault of yours that Andronicus has again besmeared my honor."

"By my mother's memory, and my good sword which shall avenge her," Swain swore roundly, "it sticks in my mind that my honor has taken some slight in this business. Forget not, King, that Andronicus owes me his head for the slight he would have put upon my ward, Kristin. That, too, is Olvir's debt to me."

He grunted angrily. "I have been landfast overlong, but what can a man do if his enemies will not abide the honest sea? We will take heed where this sorry pair have fled. The power does not live can hide them from me."

Goulbain's bells jingled applause.

"Hark to Swain, brother!" he said. "If Sinan could not protect them, where else can Andronicus and Olvir find ease and rest? He is a bad enemy, this Swain—and a stout friend."



(Continued from page 132)

"My mistake," said Happy. "He looks like the guy but he ain't the guy. Dis guy what slugged me, he packed a wallop like a keg a beer. Besides, dat guy was shot, like I told ya. I put a slug in his backside."

Storky found his tongue then.

"Sure, Mr. Clancy. He was shot. We had to carry him into the wagon. Bleedin' all over."

They examined Sam very thoroughly and they could locate no wounds and no bloodstains. Clancy surveyed his stooges with disgust.

"All right," he said to Sam, "that let's you out. You can go. Sorry we had to bother you. You boys better apologize to Mr. Fisher, so he won't have no grudge against you."

Sam was taken home in Clancy's private car. He found Copper waiting for him.

"They grill you?" asked Copper eagerly, as his tail thumped a welcome.

"They certainly did."

"How'd you square it?"

"Well, the police and the prize-fighter, they said I'd been—"

Sam suddenly noticed a reddish trail along the floor.

"Copper!" he cried. "You're bleeding! What did you do, step on glass?"

"It's nothing," said Copper.

"Come here!" ordered Sam and when Copper approached he exclaimed sharply, "You're limping."

"I tell you, it's nothing," but when Sam touched his leg he winced.

"You've been shot!" said Sam.

"I think I'm going to pass out," said Copper. And he did.



"WELL," says Sam, "that's my story."

He is sitting at a table in the Tavern, waiting for Daisy to change into street clothes after her act. That's his story and he likes to tell it. Copper, curled in a warm corner, watches Sam mournfully and wishes he wouldn't talk so much. But the gang around the table egg Sam on.

"You see," says Sam—he's writing those witty little editorials once more for the *Chronicle*—"you must never try to play a part you weren't meant to. The Guy who casts us for the roles we're meant to play, he doesn't like us to step out of character. Isn't that so, Copper?"

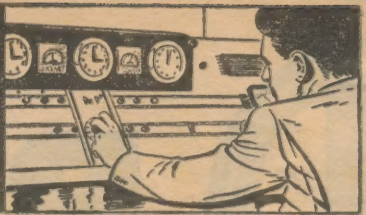
"Come on," laughs someone, "let's hear you say something, Copper."

Copper growls. He doesn't like these wise boys. He limps over to the table for Sam to scratch his head. His leg still bothers him, but he doesn't talk about it. He doesn't care to talk at all any more. He's had his day.

THE END

SHOP METHOD HOME TRAINING

NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE NEEDED!



Get into **RADIO** **ELECTRONICS** **TELEVISION** now!

SHOP METHOD HOME TRAINING
Your opportunity is here. Radio technicians needed everywhere—afraid in action and at home in industry. Get into Radios now which embrace Radio, Electronics and Television. National Schools offers tested home training method—an actual extension of training you would receive if attending school in person. **FREE LESSON AND OPPORTUNITY BOOK**



2 BOOKS FREE

Mail Coupon for full details and Free Books

NATIONAL SCHOOLS

Est. 1905
Los Angeles



MAIL COUPON FOR BOOK & LESSON

National Schools, Dept. 8-PPR
4800 So. Figueroa, Los Angeles 37, Calif. (Mail in envelope or paste on penny postal)
Mail me **FREE** without obligation, one Lesson and Opportunity Book, with full details about how I CAN become a RADIO Technician.

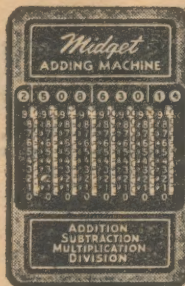
NAME..... AGE.....

ADDRESS.....

CITY..... STATE.....

INCLUDE YOUR ZONE NUMBER

AMAZING, HANDY ADDING MACHINE



Can Be Carried in VEST POCKET!

Only **\$2.50** Postpaid

ABSOLUTELY ACCURATE

Yet Weighs Only 5 Ounces

NOT only adds, but can also be used to Subtract, Multiply and Divide. Sturdily constructed with metal front and back, yet so light it can be conveniently carried in pocket as well as used in office, shop and home.

Business men find it wonderful for taking inventory, checking books, etc. . . . Accountants, brokers, salesmen for their calculations. . . . Farmers for their crop and shipment figures. . . . Housewives for their shopping. . . . Children for their school work. **ORDER YOURS TODAY!**

SEND NO MONEY

Just send name and address. Then pay postman \$2.50 plus C. O. D. charges on delivery. Or send \$2.50 with order and we pay all charges—saving you about 50 cents at the new postal rates.

LEE'S SPECIALTY CO., Dept. PPP

1616 N. Ogden Avenue

Chicago 14, Illinois

This machine is being used by Deputy Collectors of Internal Revenue, and they find it 100% accurate, helpful in their work.



YOUR OWN POST-WAR WORLD NOW!

At THE drafting board you can design a rewarding future for yourself. No one else can do this for you—and the time to start on it is *now*. When the post-war time of great opportunities arrives, it isn't going to wait for any one to catch up.

The man who is drafting ships, planes, tanks and guns today is the man who will be drafting tomorrow's aircraft units, automobiles, buildings, air-conditioning systems. With the knowledge he is acquiring now, he is drawing up his personal world within the great new world.

The greater the opportunities, the fewer the places for the untrained. The International Correspondence Schools make training in drafting—and 400 other technical and business subjects—open to all. In or out of the Armed Forces, no matter where or how you're situated, famous I. C. S. Courses are available for spare-time study at low cost.

In drafting, there's an I. C. S. Course especially designed for you whether you're a beginner ambitious to qualify as a draftsman or a draftsman who wants to become a designer and to keep on moving up from there. It's worthy of note that nearly every "big name" American in engineering and production acquired experience at the drafting board. And that many of them started by mailing the coupon you're now looking at.

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

ICS

BOX 3278-P, SCRANTON 9, PENNA.

Without cost or obligation, please send me booklet and full particulars about the course *before* which I have marked X:

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| ☐ Airplane Drafting | ☐ Building Estimating | ☐ Reading Shop Blueprints | ☐ Textile Designing |
| ☐ Architectural Drafting | ☐ Civil Engineering | ☐ Sheet Metal Worker | ☐ Woolen Manufacturing |
| ☐ Electrical Drafting | ☐ Contracting and Building | ☐ Ship Fitting | Business and Academic Schools |
| ☐ Mechanical Drafting | ☐ Highway Engineering | ☐ Shop Practice | ☐ Accounting ☐ Advertising |
| ☐ Sheet Metal Drafting | ☐ Lumber Dealer | ☐ Steel Mill Workers | ☐ Arithmetic ☐ Bookkeeping |
| ☐ Ship Drafting | ☐ Sanitary Engineering | ☐ Tool Designing | ☐ Business Correspondence |
| ☐ Structural Drafting | ☐ Surveying and Mapping | ☐ Welding, Gas and Electric | ☐ Business Management |
| Air Conditioning and Plumbing Schools | Electrical Schools | Radio School | ☐ Certified Public Accounting |
| ☐ Air Conditioning | ☐ Electrical Engineering | ☐ Electronics | ☐ City Letter Carrier |
| ☐ Heating ☐ Plumbing | ☐ Power House Electrician | ☐ Radio, General | ☐ College Preparatory |
| ☐ Refrigeration | ☐ Practical Electrician | ☐ Radio Operating | ☐ Commercial |
| ☐ Steam Fitting | ☐ Practical Telephony | ☐ Radio Servicing | ☐ Cost Accounting |
| Chemistry Schools | ☐ Telegraph Engineering | Railroad School | ☐ Federal Tax |
| ☐ Chemical Engineering | Internal Combustion Engines School | ☐ Air Brake ☐ Car Inspector | ☐ First Year College |
| ☐ Chemistry, Analytical | ☐ Auto Technician | ☐ Locomotive Engineer | ☐ Foremanship |
| ☐ Chemistry, Industrial | ☐ Aviation ☐ Diesel-Electric | ☐ Locomotive Fireman | ☐ High School |
| ☐ Chem., Mfg. Iron & Steel | ☐ Diesel Engines | ☐ Railroad Section Foreman | ☐ Higher Mathematics |
| ☐ Plastics | ☐ Gas Engines | Steam Engineering Schools | ☐ Illustrating |
| ☐ Pulp and Paper Making | Mechanical Schools | ☐ Boilermaking | ☐ Motor Traffic |
| Civil, Architectural and Structural Engineering Schools | ☐ Aeronautical Engineering | ☐ Combustion Engineering | ☐ Post Office Clerk |
| ☐ Architecture | ☐ Flight Engineer | ☐ Engine Running | ☐ Railway Postal Clerk |
| ☐ Bridge and Bldg. Foreman | ☐ Foundry Work | ☐ Marine Engines | ☐ Salesmanship |
| ☐ Bridge Engineering | ☐ Heat Treatment of Metals | ☐ Steam Electric | ☐ Secretarial ☐ Stenography |
| | ☐ Industrial Design | ☐ Steam Engines | ☐ Traffic Management |
| | ☐ Mechanical Engineering | Textile School | Language School |
| | ☐ Mold-Loft Work | ☐ Cotton Manufacturing | ☐ Spanish ☐ French |
| | ☐ Patternmaking | ☐ Rayon Weaving | ☐ Good English |

Name..... Age..... Home Address.....

City..... State..... Present Position..... Working Hours.....

Canadian residents send coupon to International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Ltd., Montreal, Canada.
British residents send coupon to I. C. S., 71 Kingsway, London, W. C. 2, England.

SPECIAL TUITION RATES FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES

Let Us Send You
FREE
with DOLLAR BOOK CLUB Membership

DAPHNE duMAURIER'S newest and greatest romance HUNGRY HILL

Meet Fanny-Rosa,
Miss duMaurier's
Most Captivating
Heroine!

Fanny-Rosa Flower, beautiful, tantalizing devil-may-care, not only inflamed the heart of Copper John's son, but influenced the fortunes of the family for both good and evil



Enjoy the Most Entertaining Novel Ever Written by the Famous Author of "REBECCA" and "FRENCHMAN'S CREEK"

A CCEPT this sensational best-seller FREE with membership in the Dollar Book Club! "Hungry Hill" is the book that has been eagerly awaited by every reader who thrilled to "Rebecca" and "Frenchman's Creek." It is a big, powerful novel with all the color and brilliant handling of atmosphere and character which has marked Miss duMaurier's other fiction successes.

The story of "Hungry Hill" is centered in the bitter struggle between two Irish countryside families—the self-righteous, progressive, and smug Brodricks and their sly, improvident and vicious neighbors, the Donovans. A quarrel in which a Donovan shoots down Copper John's father starts a feud which is to last for generations. Into this tense and dramatic setting walks Fanny-Rosa Flower, the green-eyed, careless beauty,

It was not a fish, but Fanny-Rosa, and instead of shrieking in distress she smiled and said, "Won't you come in, too?"



bringing a wild, irresponsible charm that finds a target in the heart of Copper John's son John—and throws a new and disconcerting element into the lives of the staid Brodricks. The romance of Fanny-Rosa and John creates a combination of opposing temperaments that leads to an absorbing and suspenseful climax.

"Hungry Hill" is a novel in the great tradition, dealing with the lives of several generations, rich in fascinating characters and unusual situations. Although it sells regularly in the publisher's edition for \$2.75, you may have a copy FREE if you join the Dollar Book Club now. Read full details below.

DOLLAR BOOK CLUB MEMBERSHIP IS FREE! —and it brings you amazing bargains like this!

THE DOLLAR BOOK CLUB is the only club that brings you books by outstanding authors, for only \$1.00 each. This represents a saving to you of 50 to 75 per cent from the original \$2.00 to \$4.00 price. Every selection is a handsome, full-sized library edition, well-printed and handsomely bound in a format exclusively for members.

Members are privileged to purchase as many Club books as they wish at the special price of \$1.00 each. Although one selection is made each month and manufactured exclusively for members at only \$1.00 each, you do not have to accept a book every month; only the purchase of six selections a year is necessary.

The Economical, Systematic Way to Build a Library of Good Books
Dollar Book Club selections are from the best modern books—the outstanding fiction and non-fiction by famous authors—selected from the important new books submitted by the leading publishers. Such outstanding best sellers as **THE PRODIGAL WOMEN**, **MRS. MINIVER**, **KING'S ROW**, **DRAGON SEED**, **THE STRANGE WOMAN** and **THE SONG OF BERNADETTE** were all received by members at \$1.00 each, while the public was paying from \$2.00 to \$3.00 for the publisher's edition, at retail. 300,000 discriminating readers are enthusiastic supporters of the Dollar Book Club. This huge membership enables the Club to offer book values unequalled by any other method of book buying.

Start Enjoying Membership at Once—Upon receipt of the attached coupon you will be sent a Free copy of **HUNGRY HILL**. You will receive each month the free monthly magazine called "The Bulletin," which is sent exclusively to members of the Club. This Bulletin describes the selection and reviews about thirty other books (in the original publishers' edition selling at retail for \$2.00 or more) available to members at only \$1.00. If, after reading the Bulletin, you do not wish to purchase the next month's selection for \$1.00, you may notify the Club anytime within two weeks, so that the book will not be sent you. You may request an alternate selection if desired.

Send No Money—Just Mail the Coupon—When you see **HUNGRY HILL** and consider that this free book is typical of the values you will receive for only \$1.00, you will realize the great advantage of free membership in this popular Club. Don't miss this wonderful offer. Mail the coupon now. **DOUBLEDAY ONE DOLLAR BOOK CLUB**, Garden City, New York.

MAIL THIS COUPON

FREE: "Hungry Hill"

Doubleday One Dollar Book Club,
Dept. 8 P.O.P., Garden City, New York

Please enroll me free for one year as a Dollar Book Club subscriber and send me **HUNGRY HILL**, FREE. With this book will come the current selection, for which I will pay postman only one dollar, plus a few cents shipping charges. I am also to receive my first issue of the free monthly Club magazine called, "The Bulletin," describing the one-dollar bargain book for the following month and several alternate bargains which are billed at \$1.00 each to members only. Each month thereafter I am to have the privilege of notifying you in advance if I do not wish the following month's selection and whether or not I wish to purchase any of the alternate bargains at the Special Club price of \$1.00 each. The purchase of books is entirely voluntary on my part. I do not have to accept a book every month—only six during the year to fulfill my membership requirement. And I pay nothing except \$1.00 for each selection received, plus a few cents handling and shipping costs.

Mr. _____
Mrs. _____
Miss _____ (Please Print)

Street and No. _____

City _____ Zone No. _____
(If any).

State _____

If under 21, age please. _____
Slightly higher in Canada: 105 Bond St.,
Toronto

CALVERT SALUTES A CLEAR-HEADED AMERICAN



The War Bond Buyer

His is the dream of Peace
and a Future firmly built
To stand unshaken in a nation
free and strong.
And his the gladly given dollars,
his the Bonds
To win, and hold, and shape that
bright Tomorrow!

He knows that out of Bonds

Come bombers . . . tanks . . . and guns . . .
Come the very means of life and sustenance
For those who face the enemy on
distant shores.

He buys until the limit of his purse —
and more!
Because he knows that out of Bonds —
comes Victory!

He is a Clear-Headed American!

☆☆☆☆☆☆

Calvert Distillers Corporation publishes this message
in the interest of the home front war effort

